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LECTURES AND MISCELLANIES.

BY

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OF CH. CH. OXFORD M.A., AND LINCOLN'S INN.



LONDON: 

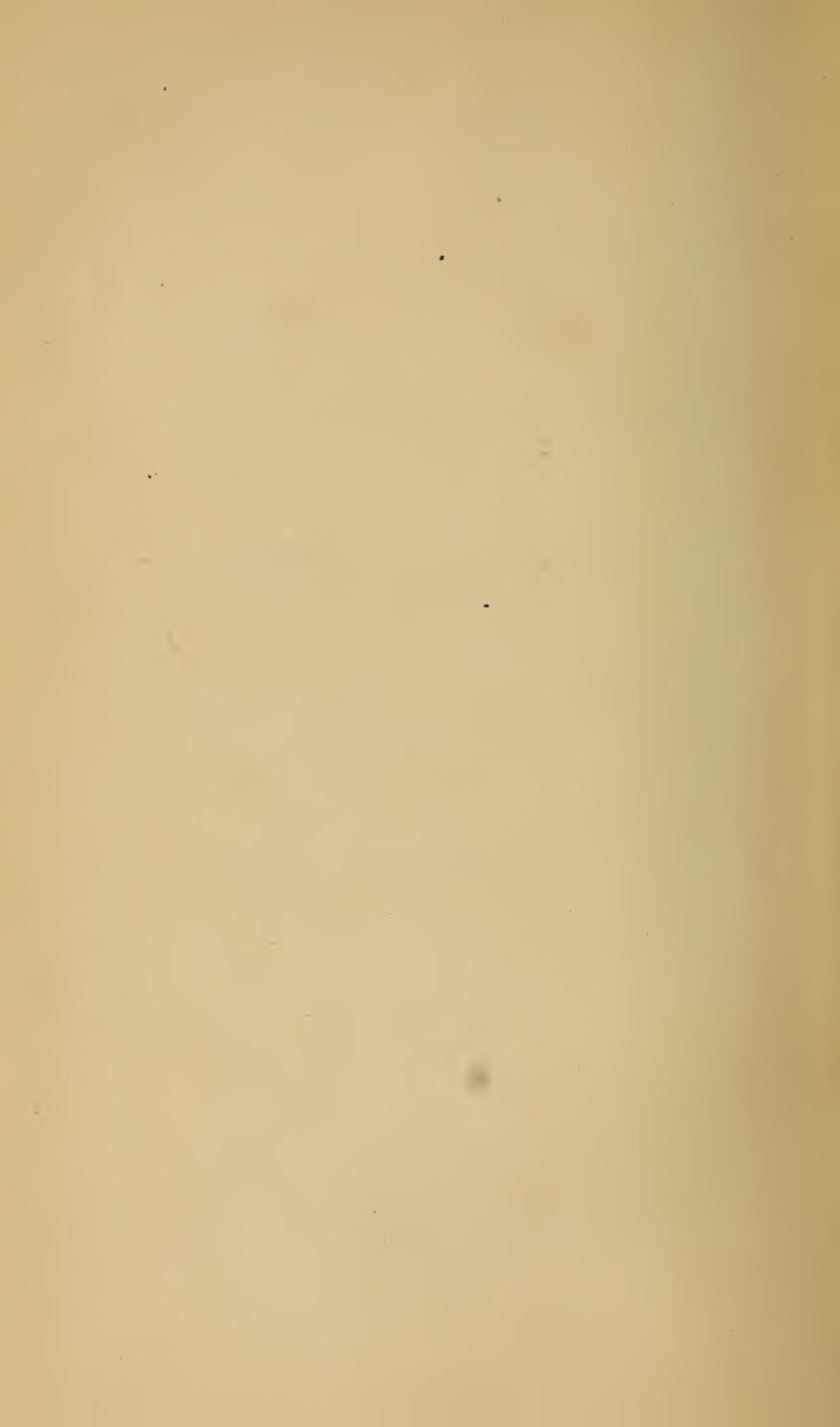
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1857.

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TO
THE MEMORY
OF
JOSEPH HUME,
A LIBERAL,
A FEARLESS, HONEST, INDEPENDENT MAN,
THE AUTHOR
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBES
THIS VOLUME.



A TRIBUTE.

I PLACE upon my page an honour'd name,
Symbolical of independent fame ;
The name of one who, 'mid corruption, stood
Th' unyielding champion of his country's good ;
An upright man, and great, without pretence,
In fearless honesty and common sense.
High o'er the bitterest taunts of fierce debate,
Proud Noble's scorn, and Faction's envious hate,
His spirit rose ; no cringing flatterer he ;
No sycophant of mere Nobility.
Pure through his veins the blood of Freedom ran ;
While toil achiev'd what Patriot's heart began.

His name I place upon my page, yet weep
O'er zeal now quench'd in Death's unbroken sleep,
And bending low, the mourner's garb assume,
With Truth and Freedom o'er the grave of HUME.

“But chief be steady in a noble end,
And show mankind that Truth has yet a friend.”

BROWN, *Essay on Satire*.

“Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring happy bells across the snow :
The year is going, let him go ;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.”—TENNYSON.

“Those are good words that are true words.”

ERASMUS, *Colloq. L'Estrange*, p. 126.

“To every poet, to every writer we might say : Be true, if you would be believed. Let a man but speak forth with genuine earnestness the thought, the emotion, the actual condition of his own heart ; and other men, so strangely are we all knit together by the tie of sympathy, must and will give heed to him.”—CARLYLE.

P R E F A C E.

A PORTION of the Lecture on Literary Impostures was delivered in 1852, before the members of the Chichester Literary Society and Mechanics' Institute. I have subsequently revised it, and added somewhat to its length, in the hope that I should thereby render it more practical and useful. I have also added an Appendix, containing extracts from different authors upon subjects alluded to incidentally in the Lecture. My object throughout has been to show, as far as possible, by means of Literary Illustrations, that Free Inquiry is essential to the cause of Truth ;—that Private Judgment is not merely a right, but a duty also, and a necessity. Should I prove successful in my endeavour to stir up those whom my remarks may reach to independent mental efforts, and to fearlessness in the pursuit of Truth, I shall feel that I have done some service to a cause which I have much at heart.

A portion of the Lecture on the Life and Writings

of Lamartine was delivered before the members of the Society above referred to in March, 1854.

The Miscellaneous Papers and Notices are selected from those which the Author has sent at different times, as an amateur contributor, to the columns of the Press. He reprints them, not because he over-estimates their importance, but because he hopes that, though short, they may be found to contain something in the shape of comment or of extract, either practically useful or interesting in a literary point of view.

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LITERARY IMPOSTURES.

WHEN invited by your Committee to place myself in the position which I at present occupy, I felt some little hesitation in complying with their request. I felt that to occupy, with advantage to an audience, the position which I at present fill, demanded many popular qualifications, to the possession of which I could make no pretension. Compliance, however, seemed a pleasing duty, and I consented, well knowing that I should have a critical, but, at the same time, an indulgent audience.

In looking for a subject on which I might address you, I was anxious to find one which might make our present meeting an occasion upon which, while inviting your attention to matters of literary interest, I might also incidentally direct it to some of those great practical purposes which it is the leading object, and, at the same time, the glorious privilege of institutions of this character to promote.

First and foremost among those purposes are the following: to associate in the intercourse of mind with

mind men of every class and station—to facilitate inquiry—to promote research, and to serve by so doing the sacred cause of Truth—to strengthen and to advance the independence of the individual judgment—to elevate the feelings and to refine the taste. Should my efforts in any way contribute to these ends I shall rejoice in the result, and feel grateful for your attention.

But let me, in the first place, warn you, particularly my younger hearers, against relying over much upon external aid. Mind must educate itself. Lecturers and schoolmasters may point the way, but industry, research, and last not least, an earnest longing after Truth, are the means by which all great things have been and must be accomplished. Start not at the apparent magnitude of any intellectual task. Moderate talents, combined with energetic industry, and a steady use of opportunities, will enable most men to achieve results which indolence delights to call impossible. “Not by force, but by the frequency of its fall, the drop of water hollows out the hardest stone.” As was said by Chatterton, whose productions will be noticed presently, “God has sent his creatures into the world with arms long enough to reach anything if they will be at the trouble.”

An accidental circumstance led me to select the subject which I have chosen for this evening’s lecture. A large folio volume, in Arabic and Italian, was offered

me, just before the time at which I was requested to give a lecture, by a bookseller who has procured for me a variety of works on Oriental literature and history. Some misgivings which I felt induced me to decline to purchase it, until I had made inquiries respecting its authenticity. It proved to be a literary fraud, and, having thus been led to inquire into the subject of literary impostures generally, I have selected them as a curious and not uninstructive theme for the remarks which I have now to offer.

The forgeries by the Abbé Vella, one of which is embodied in the volume before alluded to, coincide very nearly, in point of time, with three other forgeries of a very remarkable character—that of the so-called Ossian's Poems by Macpherson; that of the Rowley Poems, and other Papers, by Thomas Chatterton; and that of the Shakspeare Plays and Papers by William Henry Ireland. These forgeries all occurred in the latter half of the eighteenth century. To the first three I shall principally confine myself, and as probably many of my hearers are not familiar with their attendant circumstances, I shall briefly give the leading incidents, and offer a few practical comments on the history of each.

First in point of time, and also of importance with reference to the controversy which it occasioned, and the critical ability which it called forth, is the forgery

by Macpherson of the so-called Ossian's Poems. A controversy in which Johnson, with the three historians, Gibbon, Hume, and Laing, took part, and in which, that a jury of poets might judge a poet, Scott and Moore embarked and gave their verdict against the defendant, involves matters of no common character, of no ephemeral or transient interest. A condensed and very able and fair account of it is given under the head of Ossian in the seventh edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' and Laing's Dissertation on the subject is appended to the fourth volume of his 'History of Scotland.' In Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' in Burton's 'Life of Hume,' and in the sixth volume of the 'Edinburgh Review,' you will find interesting notices of this fraud. Hume's Essay on the genuineness of the poems, of many arguments contained in which I have availed myself, is given in an Appendix to the first volume of Burton's work. This Essay is a posthumous publication, and Burton says: * "It is probable that the sole reason why Hume never published this detection was a kindly feeling to his friend Dr. Blair, against whom he might not wish to appear in a controversy where the critical powers of the latter would be so severely tested." Two Prize Essays on this subject, published in the sixteenth volume of the 'Transactions of the Royal Irish

* Vol. ii. p. 86.

Academy,' are also well worthy of perusal. To these it is desirable to refer, because they furnish many useful hints towards the formation of those habits of research, as well as independent critical thinking, which are in the highest degree essential to the separation of Truth from Error. They show fully, though I can only glance at them, the modes of dealing with internal as well as external evidence. They show how any man who really longs for Truth may put the veracity of a writer fully and fairly to the test. They show the sort of things that we should look for, when we have before us the work of any author who may be suspected of dishonesty.

The facts as regards the Ossianic poems are shortly as follows. In the year 1760 Macpherson's first pretended translations from the Gaelic or Erse language made their appearance. They attracted great attention in the literary world, and a subscription was entered into to enable Mr. Macpherson to travel into the Highlands, and collect those larger and more complete poems which he represented as existing there. The result was the successive publication of two long epic poems, 'Fingal' and 'Temora,' with other Ossianic fragments. These poems were highly admired and praised, and the national predilections of the Scotch contributed largely to their success. Gray the poet, who possessed a fine and cultivated taste, is

known to have thought favourably of them, and they have been translated into many European languages. The Germans alone have six different translations of them. The Italian translation by Cesarotti is well known, and they have been excellently translated into Russ by Ermilius Ivanovitch Kostrow, the son of a Russian peasant. Dr. Johnson denied their authenticity, and, what was more provoking to their admirers, denied that they had any merit. But Johnson had strange notions about poetry, and used to say that the perusal of Milton's 'Paradise Lost' was a duty rather than a pleasure. He could not even appreciate the beauties of the Odes of Collins, which Southey thought the finest in our language. Blair had published a Dissertation, vindicating the authenticity of the Ossianic poems, and seriously ranking them with the productions of Homer and Virgil. Johnson did not know this; and when he was asked in Blair's presence whether he thought that any man of a modern age could have written such poems, he said: "Yes, Sir, many men, many women, and many children." He said on another occasion that a man might write such stuff for ever, if he would abandon his mind to it. But the poetry which Byron loved, and which, even when translated into French, was the object of Napoleon's admiration, is more than rescued from contempt, and few, if any, will concur with the learned doctor in thinking it

devoid of merit. Indeed, it possesses merit enough, and more than enough, to have procured for any author an enduring fame. It is far more easy to concur with Johnson in the spirit of that manly letter, in which he rebuked Macpherson as an impudent impostor. That letter I shall have the pleasure of reading presently at the conclusion of my remarks on the Ossianic poems.

The art with which Macpherson strove to give the semblance of authenticity to his productions is well set forth by several of the authorities before referred to, and particularly in the article by Sir Walter Scott in the sixth volume of the ‘Edinburgh Review.’ Traditions, names, and incidents occurring in the fragments of the popular ballad poetry of Scotland were inserted in the Ossianic poems, as Macpherson’s taste or purpose might require. Hence it was that to the Highlander these poems called up images with which he had from childhood been familiar, and his early associations and national predilections were enlisted in favour of the fraud. Macpherson, too, by a dexterous anticipation, appropriated to Ossian the most classical places in Scotland, such as Carron, Glencoen or Cona, and Dumbarton, the Alcuith of Bede. The skill of the impostor was in these respects complete, and the delusion of the Highlander sincere. Some specimens of the Gaelic fragments, which were worked up by Macpherson into the so-called Ossian’s Poems, are

given by Sir Walter Scott in the article before referred to. The Highland Society took great pains in collecting as many of them as it was possible to obtain, but the committee of that society reported that they had not been able to obtain any one poem the same in title and in tenor with the poems published by Macpherson. The committee, after alluding to the changes made in those Gaelic fragments, declared themselves unable to determine to what extent Macpherson exercised those liberties.

It is hardly necessary, at the present day, to enter at length upon the proofs which have established conclusively against Macpherson the forgery of the Ossianic poems. I must, however, refer briefly to some of the arguments adduced.

In the first place, no very ancient Erse manuscripts, such as those in which Macpherson pretended to have discovered the originals of Ossian, ever have been, or ever will be produced, for this simple reason, that they do not exist. "No man," says Dr. Johnson, "has a credit upon his own word, when better evidence, if he had it, may be easily produced. But, so far as we can find, the Erse language was never written till very lately for the purposes of religion. A nation that cannot write, or a language that was never written, has no manuscripts."* He says further, in allusion to in-

* Shaw, who was the author of a Gaelic Grammar and Dic-

quiries made during his Tour to the Hebrides, that “none of the old families had a single letter in Erse that he heard of.” But the most conclusive evidence on this point is that of Mr. John Mackenzie, of the Temple, London, whom Macpherson by his will left sole trustee for the purpose of publishing the originals of Ossian. This gentleman, on being applied to by the Committee of the Highland Society for these originals, replied, that after a strict search no such books could be found; that the manuscripts left by Macpherson were not ancient, but in the handwriting of himself, or others whom he had employed to take down the poetry, or to copy it from the manuscripts with which he had been furnished. These facts may serve to show us how necessary it is, with reference to all historical matters, or republications of or translations from ancient documents, to ask the following simple questions. Where and in what state are the original manuscripts? In whose custody have they been preserved? If these questions cannot be answered satis-



tionary, and who is spoken of in the first of the Prize Essays before referred to as “a sturdy moralist who loved truth better than Scotland,” writes as follows in pages 26 and 27 of his ‘Enquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems ascribed to Ossian’:—“It is well known that the Erse dialect of the Gaelic was never written nor printed until Mr. MacFarlane, late minister of Killinvir, in Argyleshire, published in 1754 a translation of ‘Baxter’s Call to the Unconverted.’ ”

factorily, there is ground for something more than bare suspicion.

No ancient manuscripts, then, of the Ossianic poems exist, and their traditional descent seems hardly within the limits of possibility. One cannot conceive, as it is well urged by Mr. Hume, that long and regular epic poems, composed as Macpherson said more than fifteen centuries since—poems too which have nothing in the shape of miracle or wonders, superstition or useful instruction, to attract the people—should have been faithfully handed down, by oral tradition, from father to son, through ages ignorant of letters, by the rudest perhaps of all the European nations—the most necessitous, the most turbulent, the most ferocious, and the most unsettled—a people ever harassed by the incursions of neighbouring tribes, or meditating revenge and retaliation on their neighbours—a people, too, who during twelve centuries at least of the period referred to had no writing and no alphabet, and who even in the other three centuries made little use of their imperfect alphabet for any purposes.

The literary history of the world presents no example of so marvellous an occurrence. The Lapland and the Runic Odes, which have, as observed by Mr. Hume, a savage rudeness and sometimes grandeur, suited to the ages in which they were produced, are, he tells us, small in compass: and this, I may add, might

be said with equal truth of the early poetry of the Arabs.

Let us now glance for a moment at the chief internal evidences of imposture. The manners of the people as represented in these poems, and the chivalrous notions of the heroes, are inconsistent with everything which we have heard of as characteristic of remote and barbarous ages. Fingal carries his ideas of chivalry far beyond those of Amadis' de Gaul—immortalized by the ridicule which Cervantes has thrown on his exploits in ‘*Don Quixote*’*—or of Lancelot de Lake, whose achievements in the sixth century contributed so largely to swell the fabulous renown of King Arthur and the Knights of his Round Table. Fingal, when his territory is invaded, disdains to repel the enemy with his whole force. He sends only an equal number against them under an inferior captain. When these are repelled he sends a second detachment, and it is not till after a double defeat that he deigns himself to descend from the hill and to attack the enemy. Fingal and Swaran combat each other all day with the greatest fury. When darkness suspends the battle, they feast together with the greatest amity, and then

* “Lancelot of the Lake, a bright romance,
That like a trumpet made young pulses dance,
Yet had a softer note that shook still more.”

LEIGH HUNT’S ‘*Rimini*,’ ‘*Q. R.*’ xiv. 480.

renew the combat with the return of light. Are these, asks Mr. Hume, the manners of barbarous nations, or even of people that have common sense ?

Internal evidence of Imposture is furnished also by the following circumstance. The Caledonians as well as the ancient Irish had no shipping, but carrachs, or wicker boats, covered with hides. Yet they are represented in the Ossianic poems as passing in great military expeditions from the Hebrides to Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

The great historian of the Roman empire has also directed attention to Macpherson's blunder with respect to Antoninus, whom he called Caracal or Caracalla, although he was not known by the latter name until after the period of which Macpherson speaks.

I can of course only point to a few of the leading proofs by means of which Macpherson has been convicted of Imposture. They are given in detail in the works which I have referred to, and are full of curiosity and interest.

The impostures of Macpherson have been made to serve an end very different from that which their author had in view. By the spirit of inquiry and criticism which they awakened, they gave wings to the understanding, and spurred forward human intelligence in the vigorous pursuit of Truth. Historical truth, too, has been a gainer by the amount of attention

which they fixed, not only on the early state, but also on the relative condition of Scotland and Ireland.

I shall close my remarks upon the Ossianic forgeries by reading Johnson's letter, which I have before referred to. It is one of the finest specimens of laconic indignation, combined with fearless love of Truth, that ever issued from the pen of man. When accused by Dr. Johnson of imposture, Macpherson appears to have addressed to him a threatening letter, to which Johnson penned the following reply :—

“ Mr. James Macpherson,—I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel, and what I cannot do for myself the law shall do for me. I hope I never shall be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian.

“ What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture—I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reasons to the public, which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

“ SAMUEL JOHNSON.”

One hardly wonders after this that Goldsmith should have said :—“ There is no arguing with Johnson, for,

if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt end of it."

Let us now glance for a moment at the fate and fortunes of Chatterton, the marvellous Bristol boy. It is a sad, strange life to look at, full of contrasts wild and startling. How often in Mind's mysterious, inscrutable and subtle compound, as in the grosser picture-world of nature, do we find the brightest lights and darkest shadows in close proximity! We see in Chatterton the highest gifts of intellect consecrated—desecrated, let me say—to the production of melodious lies, most tuneful falsehoods springing almost from inspiration;—sweet affection for mother, sister, kindred, unaccompanied by that higher sense of moral rectitude, that fascinating, fearless love of Truth, which we naturally expect to find in graceful union with tender feelings and with domestic virtues. But Chatterton's was a hurried transit,—the meteor's or the comet's destiny. With him Life's day-dream was both begun and finished at a period when for others day has hardly dawned. He was a poor, proud, charity-school boy, beginning life with many disadvantages. He devoted his unquestionable powers to falsehoods literary and historical. He was at sixteen a poet of no ordinary pretensions; he left his home, and the profession for which he had been intended, to seek his fortune in the literary world. Before eighteen he was sleeping in a

pauper's grave, a suicide. With such a case I am most anxious to deal tenderly, but a lie is still a lie, whether told by man or boy. We may make allowances for the individual, but we dare not palliate the thing.

In forming their moral judgment upon Chatterton, let those, on the one hand, who find in his extreme youth and early disadvantages an excuse for all delinquencies, remember the precocity of his genius. Let those, on the other hand, who can look only on the frauds of which he stands convicted, recall the circumstances of his early years—the discipline, to him most uncongenial, first of a Bristol charity-school, and then of an attorney's office. Let them bear in mind that love for kindred, which his pride though obdurate could never stifle,—the self-denial which he practised,—the continual privations which he endured,—his restless genius and his untimely end :—let them consider these things, and have the heart to judge at all events with forbearance, and in charity to hope the best. Possibly, if he had not closed abruptly his young career, he might have lived to offer at the shrine of Truth a tribute far more glorious than the homage which he had offered at the shrine of Falsehood, and have shared upon the throne of Genius the laurels which a Shakspeare won. The following sentiments which, in the ‘Bristowe Tragedy,’ he places in the mouth of Edward, who is looking on at Bawdin’s death, show that he possessed a

high poetical appreciation of the majesty and power of Truth :—

“Behold the man!—he spake the Truth;
He’s greater than a King.”

What a picture of Truth’s majesty and greatness! And this too from a mere boy, the author of the Rowley forgeries!

The earliest forgery of Chatterton, very different in character from those by which it was succeeded, was the forgery of the Burgum pedigree. Burgum was a pewterer at Bristol—a weak, vain, ostentatious man, who, instead of being contented with that honourable reputation which an English tradesman cannot fail to win by integrity and straightforwardness in his dealings, wished, or was supposed to wish, to be thought a man of family. For this Burgum Chatterton forged a pedigree, which made the pewterer a lineal descendant of a proud and almost princely Norman. One cannot help smiling at the mock-heroic gravity of the commencement of this fictitious document :—

“Simon de Seyncte Lyze, *alias* Senliz, married Matilda, daughter of Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, Northampton, and Huntingdon. He came into England with William the Conqueror, who, after the execution of Waltheof for high treason, created him Earl of Northampton in the year of Christ MLXXV.: by deed by him granted it appears he was possessed of Burgham Castle in Northumberland.”

Burgum, though ostentatious in his bearing, was not by any means ostentatious in giving. Five shillings were Chatterton's sole reward. Chatterton, however, dipped his pen in gall, and handed the pewterer down to posterity in the following lines, which occur in that strange document which he termed his will :—

“ Gods ! what would Burgum give to get a name,
And snatch his blundering dialect from shame !
What would he give to hand his memory down
To Time’s remotest boundary ?—a Crown.
Would you ask more, his swelling face looks blue ;
Futurity he rates at two pounds two.
Well, Burgum, take thy laurel to thy brow ;
With a rich saddle decorate a sow,
Strut in iambics, totter in an ode,
Promise and never pay—and be the mode.”

Yet Chatterton indulged a hope that the pewterer's gullibility and vanity might still be made to yield a more abundant harvest. A supplemental pedigree and a poem by one of Burgum's fictitious ancestors were afterwards palmed off on the weak and credulous man. “ This John,” says Chatterton, speaking, in the supplemental pedigree, of one of Burgum's imaginary forefathers, whom he represented as a monk of the Cistercian order, “ was one of the greatest ornaments of the age in which he lived. He wrote several books, and translated part of the Iliad, under the title of ‘ Romance of Troy.’ ” No wonder that the pewterer was flattered ! Whether or not he was more liberal on this

than on the previous occasion, I cannot say ; but he was doomed, having sown in vanity, to reap in mortification. After Chatterton's death he went to London, to consult the heralds of March and Garter, and the result was that he returned to Bristol, and thought more of his pewtering than of his pedigree.*

The next thing that Chatterton forged was an account of the Mayor's first passing over the old bridge at Bristol. This was published in Felix Farley's ‘Bristol Journal,’ on the occasion of the opening of the new bridge in 1768. On this occasion Chatterton's fertile brain supplied him with materials for the description of an ancient imaginary civic pageant, with its goodly array of mayor, beadles, squires, and trappings, horses, and priests mendicant and secular. On reading it one cannot but exclaim with Johnson, “It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things.”

* In Pope's ‘Essay on Man,’ Ep. IV., pride of birth is made the subject of the following severe reflections :—

“Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,
* * * * *
Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece :
But by your fathers' worth if yours you rate,
Count me those only who were good and great.
Go ; if your ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,
Go and pretend your family is young,
Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.
What can ennable sots, or slaves, or cowards ?
Alas ! not all the blood of all the Howards.”

About this time Chatterton was introduced to Mr. Barrett, who was writing a history of Bristol. Chatterton supplied him, not only with poems, but with what he called a true and particular account of the ancient churches of Bristol which had occupied the sites of the then existing structures.

These forgeries, however remarkable as the productions of a boy, are of an aspect much more dark than those by which they had been preceded. He had begun to falsify history for the purpose of getting money.

And here I must take notice of a passage which with reference to Chatterton has been quoted from Carlyle. "The past," says Carlyle, "is all holy to us: the dead are all holy, even they that were base and wicked while alive. Their baseness and wickedness was not *they*, was but the heavy and unmanageable environment that lay around them, with which they fought unprevailing; *they* (the ethereal God-given force that dwelt in them was their *self*) have now shuffled off that heavy environment and are free and pure: their life-long battle, go how it might, is all ended, with many wounds or with fewer; they have been recalled from it, and the once harsh jarring battlefield has become a silent awe-inspiring Golgotha and field of God." Such passages, by attempting to throw on circumstances the responsibility that attaches to

individuals, tend to the setting up of a hopeless, lifeless fatalism, destructive of the boundaries between right and wrong—dangerous to the individual man, to society, and to the state itself. Against the views which they promulgate, come they from Carlyle, or come they from whom they may, you will, I feel sure, join with me in entering a protest energetic and unequivocal.

The next important occurrence in the history of Chatterton is the forgery of the Rowley Poems. Some of these were offered to Dodsley, the well-known publisher, in a letter written by Chatterton in 1768. This epistle contained the offer of certain poems and of an interlude, “probably,” said Chatterton, “the oldest dramatical piece extant, wrote by one Rowley, a priest in Bristol, who lived in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV.” No answer was returned, but Chatterton, nothing daunted, in less than two months wrote again. He disclaimed in his second letter all mercenary motives, and added that, if able, he would print the tragedy at his own risk. “His motive,” he said, “was to convince the world that the monks, of whom some have so despicable an opinion, were not such blockheads as generally thought, and that good poetry might be wrote in the dark days of superstition as well as in these more enlightened ages.” His second application was as unsuccessful as the first; and he next tried, but with an equal want of success, to obtain the

patronage of Horace Walpole, to whom he successively transmitted ‘Rowley’s Rise of Painting in England,’ and his ‘History of Painters in England, with anecdotes and specimens of poetry by Rowley and others.’ The poems Walpole showed to his friends Mason and Gray, who at once pronounced them forgeries, and declared there was no symptom in them of their being the productions of near so distant an age, and recommended the returning them without any further notice. Walpole, however, who had written courteously in reply to Chatterton’s first communication, wrote to Chatterton, and told him that he had communicated his manuscripts to much better judges, and that they were by no means satisfied with their authenticity. Walpole seems, from his own statement, for his actual letter was probably destroyed by Chatterton, to have given the latter some very sound and wholesome advice. But the doubts thrown out by Walpole only served to make Chatterton more positive in asserting the authenticity of the poems. In his letter demanding that the manuscripts should be returned, he used language which Walpole terms singularly impertinent, but which Mr. Southey calls dignified and spirited. That Walpole was not justified in retaining Chatterton’s manuscripts for so long a period as he did retain them, all must admit; and if Chatterton had had truth and innocence on his side, the encomium of Dr. Southey

would have been well merited. But we ought to bear in mind that Chatterton addressed a person on whom he had endeavoured to impose, and whom he had wearied by his importunities. Dr. Southey's literary zeal, and his generous admiration for ill-fated genius, appear to me on this occasion to have got the better of his judgment. In cases of misfortune, as Campbell observes, the first consolation to which human nature resorts is, right or wrong, to find somebody to blame, and an evil seems to be half cured when it is traced to an object of indignation.

When Chatterton was questioned as to the source from which he derived the originals of the Rowley Poems no satisfactory or definite answer could be elicited. The uncle of Chatterton's father was for many years a sexton in the church of St. Mary of Redcliff, rebuilt in the reign of Edward the Fourth by Mr. Canynge, an opulent merchant of Bristol. About the year 1727 the muniment chests of the church had been broken open by leave and with the licence of the constituted authorities. Some ancient deeds had been taken out, and the remaining manuscripts left exposed as of no value. Chatterton's father, the nephew of the sexton, carried off great numbers of the parchments to make covers for the writing books of his scholars. Chatterton gave out that amongst the residue of his father's parchments he had found many

writings of a Mr. Canyngé, and of his friend Thomas Rowley, a priest of the fifteenth century, and he pretended that a portion of these manuscripts were the originals of the Rowley Poems. These, as he asserted, he transcribed, and some of them he sold to a Mr. Catcott and a Mr. Barrett, the former a merchant, the latter a surgeon, of Bristol. The poems sold were for the most part transcripts; what few parchments there were have since been deposited in the British Museum. When these poems, in process of time, were published, a long literary controversy ensued, on the history of which I will not enter, but I may mention that Dr. Milles, the Dean of Exeter and President of the Antiquarian Society, was a strenuous supporter of the authenticity of the poems, and published them in a royal quarto edition, with notes and dissertations. The good Dean made one most unlucky hit, for in speaking of the poem entitled the ‘Bristowe Tragedy, or the Death of Sir C. Bawdin,’ he affirms that a greater variety of internal proofs may be produced for its authenticity than for that of any other piece in the whole collection. It appears, however, from a letter written by Chatterton’s sister, and first published in Southey’s edition of his works in 1803, that Chatterton privately acknowledged to his mother that he was the author of this poem. Those who wish to examine the subject should read upon the one hand Bryant’s work

in favour of the authenticity of the poems, and on the other the vigorous and acute reasoning of Mr. Malone, who maintained that the poems were the works of Chatterton. They should read also the twenty-sixth section of the ‘History of English Poetry,’ by Warton.

Let me shortly call your attention to some of the means by which Chatterton has been convicted of imposture.

Strong proofs of fraud arose from the state of the pretended original manuscripts, some of which were bequeathed by Dr. Glynne Clobery to the British Museum at the commencement of the present century. When these pretended originals were examined, it appeared that the parchment on which they were written was old, but, that it might look still older, it had been stained on the outside with ochre, which was easily rubbed off with a linen cloth. The form of the letters, though artfully contrived to wear an antiquated appearance, differed very essentially from every one of our early alphabets. Nor were the characters uniform or consistent, some of the letters being shaped according to the present round hand, others according to the ancient court and text hands. Care had also been evidently taken to tincture the ink with a yellow cast. I may here observe that this process of staining the paper with ochre, and giving a yellow

tinge to the ink is commonly resorted to by literary impostors, though a close examination soon enables a practised eye to detect the trick. I have laid upon the table one of the Byronic forgeries recently mentioned in the ‘Athenæum’ and in the ‘Times.’ In this volume the paper and the ink, though the fraud is hardly perceptible by candlelight, have, I have no doubt, been similarly operated on. To communicate a stronger stamp of rude antiquity the Ode was written like prose ; no distinction or termination being made between the several verses.

The internal evidences of imposture are not less conclusive against Chatterton.

The poet occasionally forgets his assumed character, and the diction is sometimes antiquated and sometimes modern. In the ‘Battle of Hastings’ too, one of the Rowley Poems, said to be translated from the Saxon, Stonehenge is called a Druidical temple. But the established and uniform opinion of the Welsh and Armorican bards was, that it was erected in memory of four hundred and sixty Britons who were massacred by Hengist, the Saxon, in the fifth century, and this was the prevailing opinion during the period in which the battle of Hastings was fought. My subject is Literary Impostures, and not Stonehenge, but I may mention that the opinion referred to was that adopted by Geoffrey of Monmouth, who wrote a History of the

Britons in Latin in Stephen's reign. He tells us that Stonehenge was erected by the counsel of Merlin, the British enchanter, at the command of Aurelius Ambrosius, the last British king, in memory of Hengist's victims. That the Druids constructed this stupendous pile for a place of worship was a discovery reserved for the sagacity of a wiser age, and the laborious discussion of modern antiquaries, among whom Dr. Stukeley deserves especial mention. Other internal evidences of fabrication in the Rowley Poems might be adduced, but, as my time is short, an allusion to these circumstances, and to the anachronism into which Chatterton fell with reference to the origin of Stonehenge, will I hope suffice.

Chatterton, with all his genius, could not lie successfully, or sustain an assumed character so as to escape detection. Wanting truth, he wanted the one thing needful. His history is sad—its close terrible—the moral striking. But his attempted imposition, like the forgery of Macpherson, has largely served the cause of general intelligence and advanced the interests of Truth. It has contributed, by the controversy it provoked and the talent which it called forth, to quicken critical acumen, and to multiply the means by which literary fraud and artifice may be detected and held up to the odium which they deserve. Both impostures have brought out, in bold relief, this wholesome fact, that,

although the simplest man who takes his stand on Truth may occupy a position from which the cleverest cannot drive him, the man of genius who takes his stand on Falsehood cannot finally escape from the exposure and the contempt which fraud deserves.

I come next to the forgeries before alluded to of the Abbé Vella.* They were, perhaps, with reference to the interests they attacked, the boldest of all literary impostures. Five volumes of Vella's forgeries I have laid upon the table. In the present day it is not easy to procure them, as the Sicilian nobles, for reasons which I shall mention presently, destroyed everything which they could find connected with the history of these impostures. The facts are curious, and, as far as I can learn, no full account of them has ever yet been published in England.

In the year 1782 Moohammad Ibn Oothman, ambassador of Morocco at the court of Naples, took an opportunity, while at Palermo, of visiting the abbey of St. Martin near that city. He was attended by Joseph Vella, a Maltese, chaplain of a religious order, and also, at a subsequent period, Abbé of St. Pancrace in Sicily. The Maltese is a corrupt dialect of the Arabic,†

* For my account of these very remarkable forgeries I am chiefly indebted to an able article by S. de Sacy in the 'Magasin Encyclopédique,' 5^eme Année, tome vi. p. 330.

† McCulloch speaks of it as a patois of Arabic mixed with Italian.

and, as it was Vella's native language, it enabled him to serve as interpreter and guide to the ambassador during the period of his stay. The Arabic manuscripts belonging to the abbey were shown to the ambassador on the occasion of his visit. This circumstance, says M. Hager, a learned and enthusiastic German, whose literary zeal and love of Truth induced him to go to Sicily to make inquiries with reference to one of Vella's pretended discoveries, suggested the idea of the literary imposture of which I am at present speaking. Vella had heard from D. Louis Moncada, a Sicilian gentleman, that for some time past persons had been anxious for, and had hoped to find, materials in the Arabian writers for filling up a gap of nearly two centuries in the history of Sicily in the middle ages. He took the hint, and published the statement, when the ambassador had departed, that this African had found, in the library of the abbey, a manuscript containing the Diplomatic Code or correspondence between the Arabian governors of Sicily and their masters the sovereigns of Africa, relating to the above-named period. Four quarto volumes of this work are in my possession. Vella next pretended that he had corresponded with the ambassador after his return to Morocco, and had learned that there existed in the library at Fez a duplicate of the Diplomatic Code longer than that in the abbey of St. Martin ; that another

work had been discovered, forming a continuation of the Diplomatic Code, relating to the period of the Norman occupation of Sicily, together with a series of coins, confirming the historical statements which that code contained.

The imposture for the time was most successful. Airoldi, Archbishop of Heraclea, appeared willing to incur any expense which the publication of the work required. The King of Naples, to whom Vella presented a copy in manuscript of the Diplomatic Code, ordered that he, together with three pupils, should be sent at the expense of the crown to Morocco, provided with funds which might enable him to procure, from the libraries existing in that country, all the Arabian manuscripts which might in any way contribute to throw light on the history of Sicily. This project, however, was never put into execution.

The first volume of the Diplomatic or Martinian Code was published in 1789, under the auspices of Airoldi, and the second volume appeared in 1792. The first was dedicated to the king, and the second to the queen, of Naples.

Airoldi had even come to the resolution of having the pretended Arabian text printed, and for this purpose he obtained types of Arabian characters from Bodoni. An artist named Di Bella was employed to engrave the coins of the emirs, the inscriptions, the

first page of the manuscript, and certain papal letters, which will be mentioned presently.

As the pretended original of this work was a manuscript which did not contain one syllable relating to Sicily, but consisted entirely of traditions relating to Abdallah the father of Mahomet, Amina his mother, Abdool Mootalib his grandfather, Hisham his great grandfather, Abootalib his uncle, and the family of the Kooraish, Vella set to work to disfigure it in such a manner as to render detection difficult if not impossible. To this task he devoted several weeks, disfiguring it page by page and word by word. He introduced some vowel points, and corrupted the text in such a manner as to render it a matter of no small difficulty to ascertain the true sense of the original. As he feared, however, that practised eyes might discover the freshness of the ink in the interpolations of the manuscript, or of the red-lead in the titles of the paragraphs, he caused leaves of gold-beater's skin to be fixed on every page by means of a sort of glutinous glaze, in order to secure, as he pretended, the manuscript against the injuries of time. This was done at considerable expense, which fell on the unhappy monks of St. Martin, to whom the manuscript belonged. The manuscript itself had come into the hands of this abbey in 1744, and had previously belonged to D. Martino la Farino, Marquis of Madonia, who had brought it with him on

his return from the Escurial to Palermo, which was his native town.

When any one who understood Arabic presented himself, Vella refused to allow the manuscript to be inspected. His insolence increased to such a point, that he even refused to restore it to its proprietors, notwithstanding the urgent solicitations of Padre Drago, the librarian of the abbey.

The work was received and quoted as an authentic historical document by several writers of good character. There were, however, many men of learning who from the first denied the authenticity of the works in question. Among them were M. Marini, a keeper of the papal archives, who declared that the papal letters before alluded to were supposititious, and also, I am happy to say for the credit of one of our leading universities, the professor of Arabic at Oxford. The latter gentleman, on receiving the first portion of the work, condemned it at once by writing upon it the most laconic of criticisms, “good for nothing.”

Vella pretended to have discovered, from a letter contained in the manuscript in question, that the emir or prince, the father of the Arabian princess Aziza, who has given the name to a Saracenic château in the environs of Palermo, was interred in the mosque of that château. Permission was asked to excavate, a skeleton was found, and Vella, appealing triumphantly

to the fact, declared that the exact place was indicated in the manuscript, which however did not contain one syllable on the subject.

Vella's ignorance and impudence soon involved him in a variety of very whimsical blunders. On one occasion, when consulted respecting a small Turkish manuscript, he replied that it contained the history of Sicily. This manuscript, when examined by M. Calleja, professor of Arabic at Malta, proved to be nothing more than a collection of prayers in the Turkish language.

The publication of the Diplomatic Code was followed up in 1793 by the publication of the first volume of 'The Book of the Council in Egypt,' known also as the Norman Code. Two editions were published at the same time at the expense of the king. The principal edition was in folio, and contained the pretended Arabic text with a translation. It was printed with great magnificence from Bodoni's types, and adorned with plates which represented the remains of ancient Arabian edifices at Palermo. Vella affirmed that the original Arabic manuscript had come from the library at Fez, and, that circumstantiality might not be wanting to the plausibility of his falsehood, added that it had been sent to him from Morocco by way of Leghorn. The work professes to contain the correspondence between the Norman princes Count Roger and Duke

Robert Guiscardi, and Al-Moostanser Billah, the eighth in succession of the Fatimite khalifs who reigned in Egypt, and the fifth in succession from Al-Mooazz, who had established the dominion of this dynasty in that country. The Code consists of two parts. The first, in ninety-three chapters, contains the early legislation of the two Norman princes. The second contains three hundred and fifteen chapters of laws which were alleged to have been published at Messina by Count Robert.

This latter forgery was perhaps the boldest that was ever heard of. The Code propounded new and important maxims with reference to the absolute rights of the sovereign, to his exclusive ecclesiastical patronage, as well as his right to elect bishops, and to causes affecting the lands of the crown. It professed to deal also with the question of the sovereignty of Benevento and other similar disputes. The whole of Sicily was in an uproar. So great was the alarm among the nobles, (who have since endeavoured, as I stated, to destroy all vestiges of the fraud,) that the viceroy of Sicily thought it expedient, in 1794, to assure the States-General that the king, not wishing to abuse the rights which this Code appeared to confer on him, had intrusted to a literary German the task of examining carefully the work in question and its claims to authenticity.

The German edition of M. Hager's pamphlet does not mention the latter circumstance, but states that a

proposition was made in the last parliament of 1794, to demand of the king that the Norman Code might not be cited as an authority in the tribunals of the kingdom, until an ordinance of the king had formally declared it authentic. It is also stated that D. Ciccio Carelli, secretary of the government, who was suspected of being the author of this political romance, endeavoured to prevent effect being given to this proposition.

It was just about the time when the contention was at its height that M. Hager arrived in Sicily, for the purpose of verifying the fact, which had been mentioned in the European journals, that Vella possessed an Arabic version of the missing books of Livy. Vella showed M. Hager his collection of Saracenic vases found in Sicily, a variety of Arabian manuscripts, and his Cufic medals or coins, thirteen hundred of which were of gold.

These coins turned out afterwards to be of no more historical value than his manuscripts and pretended historical documents. Unlike all the genuine Arabic coins, they were, for the most part, not struck, but cast in moulds, as was proved by the engraver to the Mint at Palermo. The inscriptions, too, were at variance with the inscriptions on contemporary coins which were unquestionably genuine. I have not been able in any of the works, French, German, or English, which I

have consulted respecting Vella, to find anything that throws light on the manner in which he managed to forge such a series of gold coins, but I hope to do so at some future day.

Of the manuscript translation of the missing books of Livy he always avoided the production, and, at length, when pressed by M. Hager, produced an extract of the sixtieth book in Italian. M. Hager, on comparing this extract with the Epitome of Florus, which Airoldi had brought him, perceived that it was only a literal translation of the Epitome; and the canon Gregorio, who had been the first to attack the authenticity of the Martinian Code, now directed M. Hager's attention to the chronology, the style, and the inconsistencies of this Code. The latter was so struck with them, that he declared to the Viceroy that this work appeared to him to be a manifest imposition,—a declaration which he renewed on his arrival at Naples, in a memoir addressed to the king, which was transmitted to General Acton. M. Hager was invited to return to Sicily to examine the Martinian and Norman Codes. He did so, and remained there from 1794 until the end of 1796, but did not at that time publish the results of his inquiries, as the king said in a despatch, dated the 22nd of August, 1797, that he would publish them in due time.*

* See Note (A), page 46.

Adami, Bishop of Aleppo, an Arab by birth, having been invited by the King of Naples to visit Palermo on his return to his country in 1796, examined the two codes, and confirmed entirely the judgment of M. Hager. The result was, that the second volume of the Norman Code,* the printing of which had not at that time been finished, was sent away to be converted into pasteboard. Vella was condemned to fifteen years' imprisonment, and to reimburse the treasury for the expense of printing the first volume of the Norman Code. His judge was Monsignor Airoldi, who had been his patron and the dupe of his imposture. He was, doubtless, the last man in Europe who ought to have been selected to sit as judge on such an occasion.† The decree, which is in Latin, seems to admit that Vella, in putting together the codes in question, derived much of what he wrote from Arabic sources, though he mixed up extraneous matter in a very unskilful way.

Vella died I know not where, and care not how; except that I hope he died repentant.

He was a most indefatigable scoundrel, and one in whose favour not a syllable can be said. Like Macpherson and Chatterton, he had great abilities; but clever as he was, he was not clever enough to lie consistently, and, fortunately for the cause of Truth, few

* See Note (B), page 49.

† See Note (C), page 49.

are ever found to be so. The man's whole literary life was one huge literary lie. Having followed him, not to the gallows but to the dungeon, I must leave him to fare in it as best he may. I have not time, nor have I inclination, to trace his imprisonment to its close by death, if so it closed, or to exhibit him again in the character of a rogue at large. On his punishment I shall make but one remark. The gate of the prison, when it has closed on genius, has sometimes, as in the case of Grotius, been said to be the porch of fame, but it is only the screen which law and decency require when it keeps a clever rascal out of sight.

I could have wished, had time permitted it, to place before you the history of other frauds. The forgery by Ireland of the Shakspeare papers, and of the tragedy of 'Vortigern and Rowena,' would furnish of itself materials for a lecture. The forgeries by which Lauder endeavoured to rob Milton of his well-earned fame belong in point of time to the same century. The attempt recoiled upon its author, who was forced to a most humiliating confession of his guilt; and, having sown in falsehood, was doomed to reap in shame.

The forgeries of Psalmanazar are of a somewhat earlier period, and they suggest more melancholy reflections, because they were the fruits of genius the most undoubted, and learning the most varied and profound. This author, when he arrived in England,

passed himself off as a Formosan.* His translation of the Church Catechism into the pretended Formosan language—a language which he had himself invented—was favourably received by Compton, then Bishop of London. The learned examined it; they found it regular and grammatical, and gave it as their opinion that it was a real language and no counterfeit. This effort was soon followed by the publication of his well-known ‘History of the Island of Formosa,’ in which he said that he had been born. This history was in fact no history, but the creation of his comprehensive brain. The deception, however, was complete, the book passed through a number of editions, and was translated into divers languages. “Great,” says Disraeli, “must have been that erudition which could form a pretended language and its grammar, and fertile the genius which could invent the history of an unknown people.” But Disraeli does not mention the most remarkable fact connected with this extraordinary personage. Not only are the language and history of Formosa impostures, but the name of the author is an assumed one, an imposture likewise. Though he lived long in England—quite long enough to repent his falsehood and the errors of his youth; though he embarked, as in the case of his contributions to the ‘Universal History,’ on many conscientious and useful undertakings

* See Note (D), page 51.

under the assumed name of George Psalmanazar, his real name never has been, and probably never will be discovered.

His history conveys its moral: from a sense of shame and of respect towards his family, he refused to associate with an honourable name the errors and excesses of his youth. His contrition seems to have been sincere, and the conversation of his latter days had attractions for the good and learned. Johnson, who boasted that "he never sought much after anybody," says: "I sought after George Psalmanazar most. I used to go and sit with him at an alehouse in the city;"—an alehouse being in those days a sort of literary rendezvous. Johnson reverenced his piety, and, as for contradicting him, once said that he should as soon have thought of contradicting a bishop.

It is time to close the catalogue—and would that I could say I had exhausted it—of literary frauds. As though the list were to be prolonged indefinitely, impostures, already mentioned, have recently been made known in the columns of the literary and leading journals of the day, which, though inferior in talent and ingenuity, may perhaps rival in infamy some of the frauds before alluded to. As the facts on which a judgment must be pronounced are only partially before the public, I must content myself with saying that I refer to the Byron, Keats, and Shelley forgeries. You will

have seen that, so far as I have traced the history of literary frauds, Truth has triumphed in the end, and that the moral lesson is complete. I doubt not that these new impostures will, like them, exhibit Truth finally triumphant, and bring down infamy on their degraded authors.

But it is not only in the literary world that Falsehood has been set up as an antagonist to Truth. Within the spheres of political and religious life it has hurried on a deadly contest. Our glorious Reformation was chiefly, and in effect, an assertion of the rights of Reason, and a protest of indignant Truth against Falsehood's artifice and daring.

The struggle between Truth and Falsehood is not ended. It has convulsed, and may convulse again, the political and the religious world.

It were well if England, on all legitimate occasions, would assert and vindicate for herself and Europe the right and paramount duty of that free inquiry in political and religious matters which I have throughout this lecture traced in its application to the detection of literary fraud. It were well if she would, by some well-weighed and comprehensive scheme of unsectarian education, endeavour, within the limits of her own dominions, to teach her children how to inquire. I say, especially unsectarian ; for why should Truth, and more especially Religious Truth, be prejudiced by education ?

There are few parts of Europe in which, though Truth no doubt has language, its utterance is not suppressed. It may be, that in Anglo-Saxon hearts, Anglo-Saxon principles, and Anglo-Saxon institutions, Truth shall find her only refuge, and Liberty her latest home.

To Truth my subject more especially confines me ; and let not the friends of Truth despair. Mind's best birthright Mind shall yet maintain inviolate, and Truth shall vindicate her own. Truth is not extinguished because its utterance is suppressed. The wreath of smoke may veil the flame from view, and yet the fire be burning on in all its strength and coming brightness. The river may be frozen over and seem to stagnate, while the volume of its crystal waters rolls on in power and purity below. Yes ; and it is even thus with Truth. The very impostures to which I have alluded have been made to battle in her righteous cause. They have called forth intelligence which else had lain concealed, like the statue in the block of marble. The machinery by which fraud may be laid bare has rivalled in its progress towards completeness the march of our material civilization. Lies have come back home, and brought shame with them, to perverted genius. Truth, despite the twistings of the intellectual juggler, has triumphed in the literary world. Ay, and Truth shall compass nobler triumphs still.

Intelligence is widely spreading. Libraries and facilities for reference are increasing ; and, in exact proportion to their increase, will success in literary, historical, and religious frauds, become from day to day more hopeless. This very Institution, the very room in which I speak, is a workshop to forge weapons for Intelligence, and a bastion for the defence of Truth. I am sure that, even now, I am addressing many eager to become her champions. Impostors, at last, have forced mankind to see that the surest and simplest road to Truth is to employ research, and to judge fearlessly, independently, and for themselves. Critics too increase in number and in competency ; and critics, give me leave to say, are Truth's policemen. The light of their intellectual lanterns flashes somewhat awkwardly on Falsehood.

The voice of the people has been called the voice of God. Should we not say rather, the voice of Truth is the voice of God ? When the people, or when nations speak the Truth, God is with them, and they prevail.

But it may be said, is Truth then, as regards the past, so very desirable that we should seek it at the sacrifice of bright illusions by which our fond enthusiasm has been called forth, and in which imagination has found delight ? Yes ; for past falsehoods taint the onward stream of thought. Errors again to some may yield a hectic and a sickly pleasure, but Truth, and

the detection of artifice and fraud, must yield to healthy minds a more abiding bliss. It is more manly to wake up boldly in the bracing atmosphere of reality, and look Truth fairly in the face, than to slumber on for ever in the Paradise of fools.

A love of Truth becomes, I need not say how largely, an element of public spirit—that spirit which leads men to look into their own minds, to examine their own hearts, and to carry out in public life the principles which they find engraven there, not as a means of promoting mere self-interest, not as a means of seeking favour with the great and powerful, but because in their consciences they believe that those principles are just and true, and conducive to their country's good.

A love of Truth, moreover, a fearless earnest search for it, must lead men to a knowledge of the difficulties by which the pursuit of it has ever been beset. That knowledge suggests, or ought to suggest, a large and enlightened spirit of toleration in dealing with the opinions of our fellow men, even when we conceive that those opinions are based on error. Intolerant we should be, but of Intolerance alone.

So much has been said this evening on the subject of Truth and Imposture, that you will perhaps expect me, in conclusion, to attempt to give some answer to the great question, “What is Truth?” Truth, said Plato, is God’s substance, and light his shadow! If

asked more concerning it, without attempting to define that which is by nature infinite, I answer, it is the noblest and most sublime reality of mind and life. What is Falsehood? Life's most perilous illusion. "A lie," says Bacon, quoting Montaigne,* "faces God and shrinks from man." We may liken Falsehood to the ignis-fatuus of the morass, which glitters only to betray. We may liken Truth to the sun which shines in heaven, the source of light, and life, and health, and beauty. Alone, Truth does not make men great, but no man can be great without it, and, like virtue, to be loved it needs but to be seen. It travels through the course of History upon a pathway which Omnipotence has traced. Tyrants seek to trample it under foot, but it survives to perpetuate their shame. Falsehood pays it homage, for it assumes its stamp and guise, that its worthless counterfeits may pass with men as current coin. Its voice is one which all nations understand, though it sometimes seems to die away among them, or lingers but in echoes, faint, feeble, and inarticulate. Still Truth never dies. Truth cannot die. It exists through an eternity of being — it smiles upon the wrecks of time. The obstacles which Truth encounters, the clouds which dim its progress, shall but enhance its lustre, when it shall stand at length supreme. It gives to poetry its noblest aspirations, to literature

* Montaigne's Essays, book 2, c. 18, p. 421.

vitality, and dignity to man. Its purest dwelling is the bosom of the Most High, its earthly triumph the heritage which Mind must win. But Mind has limits : the maximum of knowledge—the maximum of truth, which it can in this world make its own, are but as a drop of water in the ocean, compared with the comprehensiveness of that Truth which has existed from all eternity in the mind of the Supreme Being.

Give me leave, at parting from you, to thank you for your kind attention, and to conclude with the expression of one heartfelt wish. In all your literary efforts, in all you think, write, do, or say, may you earnestly and fearlessly follow Truth, and make, by God's blessing, Truth your own.

NOTE S.

NOTE (A) to page 35.—DIPLOMATIC OR MARTINIAN CODE.

THE following is a summary of the proofs, as given by M. Hager, which negative the authenticity of the Diplomatic or Martinian Code :—

The manuscript which Vella pretended was the original of the Code is not, as he stated, in Cufic, nor even in African characters, but in the Neshki character, which is used by the Arabs of Turkey and of Egypt.

The Mahometan months are lunar, but Vella, in three instances, introduces the names of Syrian months, which are solar—Adar, Ailool, and Kanoon Ath-thani. Another month is called Aoozah (it should have been at all events Aoost), after the faulty text of the Cambridge Chronicle, published by Carusius.

The names of seven months are Arabian names of lunar months, most of them incorrectly written ; and there are other equally absurd mistakes.

Carusius had noted in the margin of the Cambridge Chronicle the solar months of the Latins, which corresponded in the years of which he spoke with the lunar months of the Mahometans. Vella, forgetting that this correspondence is continually changing, made it the same throughout his work.

He was also betrayed into an anachronism in calling Constantinople, Stamboul. In the article by De Sacy

this mistake is referred to, but not explained by any reference to the dates at which the respective names were applied.

When he speaks of money, instead of the Arabian words Dinar and Dirhem, we find the Turkish words Zermabool and Groosch, the last of which is borrowed from the German.

In matters of chronology, too, he made great blunders. The succession of the emirs of Sicily and the sovereigns of Africa, with the dates of their accession and their deaths, are continually at variance with Noowairi and Aboolfeda, but follow exactly the Sicilian authors Invèges and Carusius. The dates, too, of Vella's coins are adapted to the chronology of Invèges and Carusius.

The African kings are called Moolai. This title is said to be altogether unknown in the earlier Arabic historians. "I believe," says De Sacy, "that the title is modern, and cannot be carried further back than the commencement of the present dynasty of the kings of Morocco."

Instead of calling themselves Mooslimoon, Musulmans, or Moominoon, true believers; and the Christians Mooshrikoon, polytheists, or people who associate others with God; Kooffaroon, infidels; Nassaroon, Christians; the Mahometans, in speaking of themselves, are made to say: "Our people, our nation;" and they call the Sicilians "The hostile nation, the Sicilian nation."

In speaking of dates too, Vella refers to the year of Mahomet, instead of referring, as is the practice with Arabian writers, to the era of the flight.

Instead of the Arabian formulary, “In the name of God the Merciful, the Giver of Mercy,” Vella employs the following: “In the name of God and Mahomet.” He makes mention of Mahomet, too, without adding, after the fashion of Arabian writers, “May God’s blessing rest upon him, and peace.”

As regards the authenticity of the Papal letters before referred to, it may be observed that Vella makes mention of Papa Morinu; but in the ninth century the bishops of Rome did not style themselves Papa, but Episcopus only. The Papal letters, moreover, are not to be found in the pretended manuscript; nor did the Popes, although they wrote, it is true, in corrupt Latin, make use of such a *patois* as that which is found in the Martinian Code.

Vella exhibited six leaves of Supplement to the Martinian Code, alleging that he had been robbed of the remainder. The paper was of the manufacture of the Fabiani at Genoa, and was such as was at that time purchased of the stationers at Palermo; the writing is throughout that of a hand unaccustomed to write Arabic; the characters are not African but Asiatic; the style and the construction of the sentences are Italian, the ideas European.

In the Catalogue of the Books in the Library of the House of Commons the ‘Codice Diplomatico’ is referred to, under the head of ‘Airoldi,’ without any reference to the fact of its being a forgery. The ‘Nouvelle Biographie Universelle,’ also, in noticing the work under the head of ‘Airoldi,’ omits to mention this important fact.

NOTE (B) to page 36.—NORMAN CODE.

As regards the pretended original of the Norman Code, it may be observed that the handwriting is recent, and that the paper is such as was then sold at Palermo. The faults in style, in syntax, and orthography are the same as in the Supplements to the Martinian Code. It is evidently a translation from Italian into Arabic; and the handwriting of the pretended original is the same as that of the copies furnished to the royal printing-office at Palermo, for the printing of the first volume of this Code, and that of the pretended Arabic translation from Livy, transmitted to M. Hager at the time of his first journey into Sicily, and which he preserved.

When called on to produce his correspondence with Morocco, Vella, after three months' delay, pretended that it had been taken away from him by night by three assassins, whom he could never succeed in tracing.

At the end of the Norman Code is the letter certifying that the manuscript had been sent off, which letter Vella pretended that he had received from the ambassador of Morocco. In this letter there are the same marks of falsehood as in the Code itself, and in the Supplements to the Martinian Code. Moreover the signature, both as to name and character, differs altogether from the authentic signatures of this ambassador.

NOTE (C) to page 36.

The following is the copy of the decree in condemnation of Vella referred to in the text:—

“ Motivum. Haud dubitandum censuimus, Vellam historiam rerum Siciliensium sub Arabum imperio, si non ex Codice Martiniano artificiose corrupto, ex Arabicis Scripturis, plurimis etsi inscitè admixtis, certè hausisse. Librum verò Concilii Ægypti impensis regiis eodem ipso instante excusum, ex aliis Arabicis scripturis aliquâ ex parte depromsisse, non paucis tamen adjectiōibus et erroribus depravatum. Quæ apographa, quæcunque ea sint, ne proferret, usus est furto commentitio, perjurio confirmato, ex quo aliquibus damnum est subsecutum. Quum vero pro exhibitione horum originalium ^b [ad imminuenda fortassis hujusmodi crimina], ^a [plures atque plures inducias inaniter jam indulserimus], ad prolationem tandem sententiae duximus deveniendum, et ideo pronunciamus: Die primâ febr XIV. indict. ann. 1796. J. factâ relatione in causis fiscalibus, iste de Vella detrudatur in castrum excellentiæ suæ benè visum, quindecim annis. Beneficium S. Pancratii, pensio, aliisque ejus bona fisco addicantur, deductis alimentis unciarum 36 annualium, donec quantum regii aeris insumptum, restituatur. Alphonsus archiepiscopus Heracliensis.”—*Mag. Encycl., ut ante*, p. 356.

I give the decree as it appears in the work before referred to, in which De Sacy says that he gives it, “tel qu'il m'a été transmis.” Two sentences of it, however, appear to me to have been by some accident transposed. By marking them respectively ^a and ^b, I have indicated what appears to me to be their natural order.

NOTE (D) to page 38. FORMOSA.

For the following description of this island I am indebted to my excellent friend Mr. John Crawfurd. It is given in a most valuable work of reference published by him in 1856, entitled, ‘A Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands and adjacent Countries.’

“Formosa, the Iha Formosa of the Portuguese, is called by the Chinese Tai-wan, or the Terraced Harbour. Near to and inhabited, as far as its aboriginal people are concerned, by the same race as the Philippines, it has some claim to be considered as part of them. It lies between north latitudes $21^{\circ} 58'$ and $25^{\circ} 15'$, and east longitudes 120° and 122° . It is of an oval form, its length being from north to south, its western side fronting the main land of China. The strait which lies between, called after the island, is, in its narrowest part, 80 miles broad, and in its widest 150. The total area of Formosa has been estimated at 14,000 square miles, so that it is by about one-fifth part larger than the classic island of Sicily. Its situation is in the very heart of the region of typhoons; and it is, moreover, subject to severe earthquakes.

“A range of high mountains runs through the island from north to south, the summits of which are clad in perpetual snow, from which it is concluded that they cannot be less than 12,000 feet above the level of the sea. An undulating plain, extending from the foot of the range to the sea, forms the western side of the island, leaving a large portion of the eastern a mountain mass. What its geological formation is has not been

ascertained; but that a portion is volcanic is certain, from the existence of craters yielding a large supply of sulphur, which is one of the staple exports of the island.

"The population of Formosa is of two descriptions, an aboriginal and a Chinese; the first for the most part confined to the fastnesses of the mountains, and the last occupying the extensive plain already named. The aboriginal inhabitants are of the same race as the fairer people of the Philippines, that is, of the Malay race; but whether divided into different tribes, speaking one language, or having many tongues, has not been ascertained. The Dutch, during their short occupation of the island, obtained a vocabulary of a Formosan language, which, on examination, is found to contain a few words of Malay and of Philippine languages, implying the probability that the first came through the medium of the last. The natives of Formosa are evidently in a very rude state, never having obtained that degree of civilisation which even the principal nations of the Philippines had reached when discovered by Europeans. A few of them have been tamed by the Chinese, and reduced by them to a kind of predial servitude. The Chinese settlers are for the most part emigrants from the province of Fokien, the inhabitants of which are known to be the most industrious, ingenious, and enterprising of the empire. It is remarkable that Formosa, although its existence must have been sufficiently known to the Chinese from an early period, was never colonised by them until they were driven to take shelter in it by the invasion of the Manchoo Tartars at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Spaniards appear early

to have formed a small settlement on the island ; and when the Dutch in 1624 began their establishment, they found a colony of Chinese, said to amount to 200,000. The present Chinese population is said to number two millions and a half. This, however, must be a great exaggeration, for, supposing them to occupy one-half the area of the island, and it is not likely that they occupy so much, the number would give 375 to the square mile, which would amount to the density of an old country, and not of a colony yielding the products of the earth cheaply, as Formosa is known to do.

“ The Dutch, after occupying a large part of Formosa for thirty-four years, were expelled from it in 1662 by a powerful Chinese pirate who had infested and invaded it. This catastrophe was the result of sheer incapacity and neglect, and it is remarkable that it should have happened at a time when their energy and enterprise were at their greatest height. Considering its temperate climate and its favourable geographical position, it is certain that Formosa might, under happier auspices, have become a great and prosperous European colony.

“ The soil of the plains and mountain slopes of Formosa is described as being of eminent fertility, and it may fairly be concluded from the height and magnitude of its mountains that this fertility is promoted by an abundant irrigation. The chief products of its agriculture are rice, wheat, pulse, millet, and sugar-cane. Its chief exports are rice, sugar, camphor, timber, bay-salt, and sulphur. Formosa forms part of the province of Fokien, the dense population of which is said to draw a large part of its supplies of food from it.”

A P P E N D I X.

TRUTH.

PERSONS who devote their time and labour to inquiring after Truth, especially if, as generally happens, they have been brought up in the bosom of error, and with minds enveloped in prejudice, most necessarily be progressive in their discoveries. As they advance in their inquiries they will see reason to discard one error after another, till in process of time they will have receded to a much greater distance from the principles from which they set out than they first expected, or indeed could have believed possible ; and from the thought of which, had it been foretold, they would have recoiled with horror, and would have been ready to exclaim with Hazael, “ What ! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing ? ” With a much slower progress, and with far greater labour, do they develop truth ; and, like a man working at the bottom of a mine, bring up one after another the precious gems. In this way they pass through life ; and if anything leads them during the course of their inquiries to publish their thoughts to the world, it will often happen that they will appear, and will actually be, inconsistent with themselves at different times, in proportion as fresh light breaks in

upon their minds, by which old errors become more apparent, and new truths are more clearly and fully developed. Unthinking persons often charge this inconsistency upon them as a fault, which is in fact the best proof of progressive improvement.

The sincere lover of Truth will never cease to inquire as long as the powers of intellect and investigation remain ; for the little which he knows inspires a thirst after further information, and he is conscious that, however successful the result of his inquiries may have been, all the knowledge which he has hitherto attained is as nothing in comparison with the vast unknown. It is said of one of the early reformers,* that when he lay upon his death-bed, if any present were discoursing upon some of those important theological questions which then agitated the Christian world, he would raise himself up in his bed, and would call to them to speak out, for that he should die with more comfort if he could learn some new truth before his departure.

* * * *

Let us then, my friends, who are sincere lovers of truth and of free and unbiassed inquiry, carefully review our progress ; and let us seriously consider what errors yet remain for us to discard, and what new truths we have yet to learn and to hold fast. Let us, like the Roman governor in the text, ask, What is Truth ? But let us not, like Pilate, break up the con-

* Chyträus of Rostock, who died A.D. 1600, aged seventy.—See Fuller's 'Lives and Deaths of Modern Divines.'

ference without waiting for an answer, and from shame, or timidity, or some unworthy motive, recede from the inquiry, and abandon to their enemies and oppressors those who kindly offer their efficient aid to guide our steps into the paths of wisdom.

“What is Truth?” To this momentous inquiry who can give a satisfactory answer? Ignorance and indolence, disguising themselves under the specious veil of moderation, exclaim, Truth is nowhere to be found. Inquiry is all in vain. The task is hopeless. The labour will be lost.

* * * *

But in order to discover Truth, prejudice of every kind must be honestly and resolutely discarded; the prejudice of education, the prejudice of fashion, the prejudice of self-interest, the love of ease, the love of reputation, the love of popularity, the love of human applause. Truth must be sought after with a single eye, for its own sake. It must be pursued wherever it leads; through honour and dishonour; through evil report and good report; through ease and pain; through affluence and comfort, if such be the tenor of its course; or, as much more frequently happens, through neglect and contempt; through difficulty and obloquy; through penury and privation; through desertion and sufferings. They who thus love Truth, they who thus seek after her, they who thus devote themselves to her, they who thus sacrifice everything for her sake; in a word, they who thus regard self as nothing and Truth as every-

thing,—these shall not ultimately be disappointed in their object: they shall not labour in vain; they shall not lose their reward. They shall find the Truth they love,—that Truth which is the worthy object of their deliberate choice, of their best affections,—that Truth which justly occupies the chief seat in their hearts. And the Truth shall make them free: but if the Truth make them free, then are they free indeed.

* * * *

Theological controversy is often conducted with great heat and animosity; human infirmity mingles with it, and human passion blinds the eye of the mind and misleads the understanding. But there is a way of managing controversy, and even theological controversy, with good sense, good temper, and good manners,—with a paramount desire, not of victory but of truth; with a disposition to receive as well as to communicate instruction; with a readiness to resign an opinion when proved to be erroneous, as well as to correct the errors and prejudices of others; and with a willingness to exercise candour and indulgence in cases where the clearest argument fails to produce conviction; making every allowance for the unconquerable ascendancy of early and radical prejudice, and of fixed principles which have been long established in the breast, even of the intelligent and candid. Discussions so conducted are the most likely to elicit Truth; and while they discover, they cannot fail to improve, an excellent moral state of mind.—*Belsham's Sermons.*

TOLERATION.

CHRISTIAN charity does not consist in all entertaining the same opinions, or worshipping in the same place ; for this is impossible where men think and reason for themselves. Charity willingly extends to others the same unmolested right of private judgment which it claims for itself ; and thinks and hopes the best of those who differ most widely in speculation and in discipline, if it discerns nothing in their character inconsistent with the spirit and the precepts of the Gospel ; and in acts of justice and beneficence it makes no distinction of party or sect, but uniformly adheres to the golden rule of doing to others as we could reasonably expect others to do to us. This is real charity : this is the charity which the Apostle taught, which Jesus exemplified, and which God approves.—*Belsham's Sermons.*

A reunion of Christians in the belief of *all* the essential doctrines of religion is not to be expected ; but, to use the golden words of Mr. Vansittart (Lord Bexley) in his excellent ‘ Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff and John Coker, Esq.,’ “There is an inferior degree of reunion, more within our prospect, and yet perhaps as perfect as human infirmity allows us to hope for ; wherein, though all differences of opinion should not be extinguished, yet they may be refined from all party prejudices and interested views, so softened by

the spirit of charity and mutual concession, and so controlled by agreement on the leading principles and zeal for the general interests of Christianity, that no sect or persuasion should be tempted to make religion subservient to secular views, or to employ political power to the prejudice of others. The existence of dissent will, perhaps, be inseparable from religious freedom, so long as the mind of man is liable to error ; but it is not unreasonable to hope that hostility may cease, though perfect agreement cannot be established. If we cannot reconcile all opinions, let us reconcile all hearts.”—*Note to C. Butler's Life of Erasmus.*

Those among them that have not received our religion, yet do not fright any from it, and use none ill that goes over to it ; so that all the while I was there one man only was punished on this occasion He, being newly baptized, did, notwithstanding all that we could say to the contrary, dispute publicly concerning the Christian religion with more zeal than discretion, and with so much heat that he not only preferred our worship to theirs, but condemned all their rites as profane, and cried out against all that adhered to them as impious and sacrilegious persons, that were to be damned to everlasting burnings. Upon this, he, having preached these things often, was seized on, and, after a trial, he was condemned to banishment, not for having disparaged their religion, but for his inflaming the people to sedition ; for this is one of their ancientest laws, that no man ought to be punished for

his religion. At the first constitution of their government, Utopus having understood that before his coming among them the old inhabitants had been engaged in great quarrels concerning religion, by which they were so broken among themselves that he found it an easy thing to conquer them, since they did not unite their forces against him, but every different party in religion fought by themselves—upon that, after he had subdued them he made a law that every man might be of what religion he pleased, and might endeavour to draw others to it by the force of argument, and by amicable and modest ways, but without bitterness against those of other opinions; but that he ought to use no other force but that of persuasion, and was neither to mix reproaches nor violence with it; and such as did otherwise were condemned to banishment or slavery.

This law was made by Utopus, not only for preserving the public peace, which he saw suffered much by daily contentions and irreconcilable heats in these matters, but because he thought the interest of religion itself required it. He judged it was not fit to determine anything rashly in that matter; and seemed to doubt whether those different forms of religion might not all come from God, who might inspire men differently, he being possibly pleased with a variety in it: and so he thought it was a very indecent and foolish thing for any man to frighten and threaten other men to believe anything because it seemed true

to him ; and in case that one religion were certainly true, and all the rest false, he reckoned that the native force of truth would break forth at last, and shine bright, if it were managed only by the strength of argument, and with a winning gentleness ; whereas, if such matters were carried on by violence and tumults, then, as the wickedest sort of men is always the most obstinate, so the holiest and best religion in the world might be overlaid with so much foolish superstition, that it would be quite choked with it, as corn is with briars and thorns ; therefore he left men wholly to their liberty in this matter, that they might be free to believe as they should see cause ; only he made a solemn and severe law against such as should so far degenerate from the dignity of human nature as to think that our souls died with our bodies, or that the world was governed by chance, without a wise overruling Providence. For they did all formerly believe that there was a state of rewards and punishments to the good and bad after this life ; and they look on those that think otherwise as scarce fit to be counted men, since they degrade so noble a being as our soul is, and reckon it to be no better than a beast's ; so far are they from looking on such men as fit for human society, or to be citizens of a well-ordered commonwealth ; since a man of such principles must needs, as oft as he dares do it, despise all their laws and customs. For there is no doubt to be made, that a man who is afraid of nothing but the law, and apprehends nothing

after death, will not stand to break through all the laws of his country, either by fraud or force, that so he may satisfy his appetites. They never raise any that hold these maxims, either to honours or offices, nor employ them in any public trust, but despise them, as men of base and sordid minds. Yet they do not punish them, because they lay this down for a ground, that a man cannot make himself believe anything he pleases ; nor do they drive any to dissemble their thoughts by threatenings, so that men are not tempted to lie or disguise their opinions among them : which, being a sort of fraud, is abhorred by the Utopians, especially before the common people. But they do suffer and even encourage them to dispute concerning them in private with their priests, and other grave men, being confident that they will be cured of those mad opinions by having reason laid before them.

* * * *

Though there are many different forms of religion among them, yet all these, how various soever, agree in the main point, which is the worshipping the Divine Essence ; and therefore there is nothing to be seen or heard in their temples in which the several persuasions among them may not agree ; for every sect performs those rites that are peculiar to it, in their private houses, nor is there anything in the public worship that contradicts the particular ways of those different sects. There are no Images for God in their temples, so that every one may represent him to his

thoughts, according to the way of his religion ; nor do they call this one God by any other name but that of Mithrás, which is the common name by which they all express the Divine Essence, whatsoever otherwise they think it to be ; nor are there any prayers among them but such as every one of them may use without prejudice to his own opinions.—*More's Utopia.*

PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

WHEN I say the *right* of private judgment, I mean that every individual Christian has a right to judge for himself by the Word of God whether that which is put before him as religious truth is God's truth, or is not. When I say the *duty* of private judgment, I mean that God requires every Christian man to use the right of which I have just spoken : to compare man's words and man's writings with God's revelation, and to make sure that he is not deluded and taken in. And when I say the *necessity* of private judgment, I mean this—that it is absolutely needful for every Christian who loves his soul, and would not be deceived, to exercise that right, and discharge that duty, to which I have referred, seeing that experience shows that the neglect of private judgment has always been the forerunner of immense evils in the Church of Christ. The Apostle Paul urges all these three points

upon your notice when he uses those remarkable words, “Prove all things.”

* * * *

There was a time, before the Reformation, when the darkness over the face of Europe was a darkness that might be felt. The General Councils of the Church are not infallible. When the whole Church is gathered together in a General Council, what says our 22nd Article? “They may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of holy Scripture.” So also with particular Churches. Any one of them may err, and prove itself fallible. Many of them have fallen foully, or have been swept away. Where is the Church of Ephesus at this day? Where the Church of Sardis at the present time? Where the Church of Hippo in Africa? Where the Church of Carthage? They are all gone; not a vestige of any of them is left. Will you then be content to err merely because the Church errs? Will your company be any excuse for your error? Will your erring in company with the Church remove your responsibility for your own soul? Brethren, it were surely a thousand times better for a man to stand alone, and be saved, than to err in company with the Church, and be lost.

But suppose you are resolved to believe whatever your ministers say, without taking up the ground of

believing what the Church says. Ministers, again, are not infallible. The very best of them are only men. Call us bishops, priests, deacons, or whatever names you please, we are all earthen vessels at the very best. I speak not merely of popes who have led abominable lives ; I would rather point to the very best of Protestants, and say, Beware of looking upon them as infallible ; beware of thinking that if you believe the word of man (whoever that man may be) you cannot err. Luther held consubstantiation—that was a mighty error ; Zuinglius, the Swiss Reformer, went out to battle, and died in the fight—that was a mighty error ; Calvin, the Geneva Reformer, advised the burning of Servetus—that was a mighty error ; Cranmer and Ridley urged the putting of Hooper into prison because of some trifling disputes about vestments—that was a mighty error ;—Whitgift persecuted the Puritans—that was a mighty error ; Wesley and Toplady, in the last century, quarrelled fiercely about Calvinism—that was a mighty error. Brethren, if your religion hangs upon any minister, whoever he may be, there is no saying into what fearful mistakes you may possibly be led. Follow us so far as we follow Christ, but not a hair's-breadth farther ; believe whatever we can show you out of the Bible, but do not believe a single word more. Neglect the duty of private judgment, and you may find to your cost the truth of what Whitby says—“ The best of overseers do sometimes make oversight ;” and may experience the truth of what the Lord said to the

Pharisees, “ When the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch.”

And, brethren, as it is impossible to overrate the evils that may arise from neglecting private judgment, so also it is impossible to overrate the blessings which from a right use of it have continually flowed. The greatest discoveries in science and in philosophy, beyond all controversy, have arisen from a use of private judgment. To this we owe the discovery of Galileo that the earth went round the sun, and not the sun round the earth. To this we owe Columbus’s discovery of the new continent of America. To this we owe Harvey’s discovery of the circulation of the blood. To this we owe Jenner’s discovery of vaccination. To this we owe the printing-press, the steam-engine, the electric telegraph, railways, and gas. For all these we are indebted to men who dared to think for themselves. They were not content with the beaten path of those who had gone before ; they were not satisfied with taking for granted that which their fathers believed was true, both in philosophy and science ; they made experiments for themselves ; they brought old-established theories to the proof, and found that they were worthless ; they proclaimed new systems, and invited men to examine them, and test their truth ; they bore storms of obloquy and ridicule unmoved ; they heard the clamour of prejudiced lovers of old traditions without flinching ; and they prospered and succeeded in

what they did. We see it now, and we who live in the nineteenth century are reaping the fruit of their use of private judgment.

As (by way of illustration) you see it has been in science, so also it has been in the history of the Christian religion. The martyrs who stood alone in their days, and shed that blood which has been the seed of Christ's Gospel throughout the world; the Reformers who, one after another, rose up in their might to enter the lists with the Church of Rome—all did what they did, suffered what they suffered, performed what they performed, simply because they exercised their private judgment about what was Christ's truth. Private judgment made the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Lollards count not their lives dear to them, rather than believe the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Private judgment made Wickliffe search the Bible in our land, denounce the errors of Rome and all her impostures, translate the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue, and become “the morning-star” of the Reformation. Private judgment made Luther examine Tetzel's abominable system of indulgences by the light of the Word; private judgment led him on, step by step, from one thing to another, guided by the same light, till at length the gulf between him and Rome was a gulf that could not be passed, and the Pope's power in Germany was completely broken. Private judgment made our own English Reformers

examine for themselves and inquire for themselves as to the true nature of that corrupt system under which they had been born and brought up: it made them cast off the abominations of Popery, and then circulate the Bible among the laity. Private judgment made them draw from the Bible our Articles, compile our Prayer-book, and constitute the Church of England as it is. They broke the fetters of tradition, and dared to think for themselves. Not taking for granted Rome's pretensions and assertions, they examined them all by the Bible, and because they would not abide the examination they broke with Rome, and cast her off completely. All the blessings of Protestantism in England, all that we have and are enjoying at this very day, we owe to the right exercise of private judgment; and if, therefore, we do not honour private judgment, we are thankless and ungrateful indeed.

* * * *

And beware, my brethren, of being moved by the specious argument, that it is humility to disallow private judgment, that it is humility to have no opinion of your own, that it is the part of a true Christian not to think for himself. Such humility is a false humility, a humility that does not deserve that blessed name; call it rather laziness, call it rather idleness, call it rather sloth. It makes a man strip himself of all his responsibility; it makes him throw the whole burden

of his soul into the hands of the minister and the hands of the Church ; it gives a man a mere vicarious religion, a religion by which he places his conscience and all his spiritual concerns under the care of others ; he need not trouble himself, he need no longer think for himself ; he has embarked in a safe ship, and placed his soul under a safe pilot, and says, “ I need take no more care.” Brethren, beware of supposing that this deserves the name of humility—refusing to exercise the gift that God has given you, refusing to employ the sword of the Spirit which God has forged for the use of your hand. Blessed be God ! our fore-fathers did not act upon such principles. Had they done so, we should never have had the Reformation ; had they done so, we might have been bowing down to the image of the Virgin Mary at this moment, praying to the spirits of departed saints, or having a service performed in Latin. Brethren, as long as you live, resolve, every one of you, that you will read for yourselves, think for yourselves, judge of the Bible for yourselves, in the great matters of your soul.

* * * *

And above all, brethren, as long as you live, look forward to the great day of judgment ; think of the solemn account which every one of us shall have to give in that day before the judgment-seat of Christ. We shall not be judged by Churches ; we shall not be

judged by whole congregations ; we shall be judged individually, each by himself. What shall it profit you or me in that day to say, “ Lord, Lord, I believed everything the Church told me ; I received and believed everything ordained ministers set before me ; I thought that whatever the Church and the ministers said must be right ” ?—*Ryle’s Sermon preached before the British Reformation Society. Published at No. 8, Exeter Hall.*

PUBLIC SPIRIT.

NEITHER Montaigne in writing his Essays, nor Des Cartes in building new worlds, nor Burnet in framing an antediluvian Earth, no, nor Newton in discovering and establishing the true laws of nature on experiment and a sublimer geometry, felt more intellectual joys, than he feels who is a real patriot, who bends all the force of his understanding, and directs all his thoughts and actions, to the good of his country. When such a man forms a political scheme, and adjusts various and seemingly independent parts in it to one great and good design, he is transported by imagination, or absorbed in meditation, as much and as agreeably as they : and the satisfaction that arises from the different importance of these objects in every step

of the work, is vastly in his favour. It is here that the speculative philosopher's labour and pleasure end. But he who speculates in order to act, goes on and carries his scheme into execution. His labour continues, it varies, it increases; but so does his pleasure too. The execution indeed is often traversed, by unforeseen and untoward circumstances, by the perverseness or treachery of friends, and by the power or malice of enemies: but the first and the last of these animate, and the docility and fidelity of some men make amends for the perverseness and treachery of others. While a great event is in suspense, the action warms, and the very suspense, made up of hope and fear, maintains no unpleasing agitation in the mind. If the event is decided successfully, such a man enjoys pleasure proportionable to the good he has done; a pleasure like to that which is attributed to the Supreme Being, on a survey of His works. If the event is decided otherwise, and usurping courts or overbearing parties prevail, such a man has still the testimony of his conscience, and a sense of the honour he has acquired, to soothe his mind and support his courage. For although the course of state affairs be to those who meddle in them like a lottery, yet it is a lottery wherein no good man can be a loser: he may be reviled, it is true, instead of being applauded, and may suffer violence of many kinds. I will not say, like Seneca, that the noblest spectacle which God can behold is a virtuous man

suffering and struggling with afflictions: but this I will say, that the second Cato, driven out of the forum and dragged to prison, enjoyed more inward pleasure, and maintained more outward dignity, than they who insulted him, and who triumphed in the ruin of their country.—*Bolingbroke, on the Spirit of Patriotism.*

LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
LAMARTINE.

WHEN I last had the pleasure of addressing you I endeavoured, not, I hope, altogether without success, to combine a practical purpose with a subject which might seem, at first sight, to be a subject rather curious than useful—to be matter of literary interest, and of literary interest alone. I endeavoured, by glancing at three or four of those leading literary impostures which have been from time to time attempted, to awaken in my audience a due sense of the importance of inquiry as a means to Truth. Truth, it has been said, lies in a well, and I was anxious to show, particularly to my younger hearers, that if they wished for truth they must penetrate below the surface. I endeavoured at the same time to lay before them a picture, no doubt feeble and imperfect, but drawn with a view to practical ends, of Truth as exhibited in its bearings on the mind of man, and on the general course and conduct of human affairs. I was anxious, also, to point out to them the interest and the glory of independent mental efforts—those efforts, free alike from blind and servile

deference to mere authority on the one hand, and from overweening confidence on the other, which are a main source of all that is truly great in literature, and noble in the character of man.

The subject of my present lecture is not in any way connected with the subject of that to which I refer. I touched then on literary impostures. I have now to deal with literary realities, for the most part of a bright and genial kind. The distinguished poet, traveller, statesman, and historian, of whose eventful life I shall present you with some few details, and of whose speeches and works, historical and poetical, but more particularly the latter, I shall offer such extracts, coupled with such comments, as I may think not unworthy of your attention, occupied, within the memory of all now present, the most prominent political post in France—that great country once our enemy, and now, thank God ! our best ally. He shot suddenly across the page of history with a kind of meteoric brightness, and then as suddenly disappeared—disappeared, that is to say, so far as concerned his political position.

There are few phenomena more brilliant in the history of men and nations, there are none in the annals of civil heroism more bright or glorious, than the position of Lamartine at the Hôtel de Ville in 1848, arresting, single-handed, and by the force of his magnificent eloquence alone, the passions and furious will

of an exasperated people. There is nothing in history more startling than the fall of one who, having saved society in 1848, could not shortly afterwards command a seat in the National Assembly of his country. Whatever may be his faults, there is magnanimity in the man whom neglect so unparalleled could not provoke to bitterness or angry recrimination.

In speaking of Lamartine as a poet I may say sincerely that, of all the modern poets, not of France alone, but of any country, except England, with whose writings taste or accident has rendered me familiar, Lamartine is the poet whom, so far as regards his earlier poetry, I prefer. His ‘Meditations’ have been my travelling companions ; and if circumstances compelled me to reduce to some fifteen or twenty the numerous works which I have collected, the ‘Meditations’ and ‘Harmonies’ of Lamartine would be in the number of those works which I should feel most anxious to retain. There are other modern poets in France whose works contain fine passages, and many exceedingly beautiful poems. There are fine bursts of eloquence, an independent national spirit, a glowing patriotic fervour, a generous and energetic love of freedom, and an utter detestation of slavery in all its forms, in the passionate outpourings of Delavigne. There are lyric grace, and melody, and beauty, and matchless mastery of language, not unaccompanied with true elevation of senti-

ment, in the ‘Autumnal Leaves’ of Victor Hugo. His beautiful ‘Prayer for all’ must wake congenial echoes in the hearts of men of every age and country. There are point, and wit, and gaiety, felicity and sweetness, severe and telling strokes of satire, in the admired and popular songs of Béranger, who covered the stupid Bourbons with not unmerited ridicule, and paved, it has been said, the way for Louis Napoleon to the Presidency and the Empire. The songs of Béranger, however, are soiled and degraded by licentiousness. There is nothing in the poetry of Lamartine to plant a frown upon the brow of Virtue, or a blush upon the cheek of Beauty. I would rather have been the author of his ‘Harmonies’ and ‘Meditations’ than of all that Delavigne, or Hugo, or Béranger have ever written.

French poetry was never in a true sense popular, and has been, indeed, comparatively speaking, but little read or known, in England. When read, it has been read far less as poetry than as matter of education and for the sake of the language and the graces of style. The poetry, poetical taste, and character of the French have been, at all events up to the time of Lamartine and Victor Hugo, essentially different from that of the English. In English poetry Nature has had to a great extent her own way—in French poetry Art was ever uppermost. The former addressed itself more par-

ticularly to the heart, and availed itself of the influence of imagination and passion as means whereby to reach and influence the deep recesses of the soul. The latter addressed itself almost exclusively to the head. It sought to captivate the understanding by point, ingenuity, epigrammatism, and concentration of idea, while it satisfied the requirements of a cultivated taste by the graces of a polished style and the purity of a soulless diction. The poetry of England was Nature's humble votary, her handmaid, and obedient minister; the poetry of France was her relentless mistress, constraining her to the adoption of cold forms, alike fatal to her inborn vigour and to the development of her highest beauty. The poetry of England sought its images in the country, and gathered choice similitudes and fragrant blossoms, full of life and joy and freshness, in the midst of scenes which Nature's graceful negligence and lavish hand had visited to adorn and bless. The heath, the forest, the tangled brake and shadowy glen, the waving reeds, the whispering trees and thickets, vocal with a thousand tongues—the river leaping boldly from rock to rock, or flowing on through flowery margins in tranquil beauty to the sea—the lowing kine, the flocks, the shepherd-boys, and all the attributes of pure and simple rustic life, were made in turn to serve the purposes and multiply the charms and the attractiveness of English song.

The poetry of England, too, addressed itself to the people without distinction of class or station. It spoke in all the strength, and energy, and varying beauty of that copious and expressive language which circumstances and the blending of mingled nations had made its own—that language which, as we were told the other day in a most beautiful and impressive lecture, our English Chaucer laboured so successfully to enrich, and Caxton to diffuse throughout the world. The poetry of France, on the other hand, sought its images and inspiration in the town, and culled its materials in the midst of the regal splendour, the artificial refinements, and laboured graces of courtly life. It addressed itself almost exclusively to the higher orders, and sought to mould its strains to the requirements of elegance and regal taste. The language itself was little suited to poetry of the highest order. Its metaphors* were for the most part unpoetical, its idioms artificial and constrained, nor was it sufficiently sonorous to add dignity and elevation to the poet's strains. It was not a hardy out-of-doors, but a tender hot-house plant, the creature of courts and of academies. It wanted the boldness, originality, vigour, and freedom, and that indefinite vagueness, which belong to lan-

* There is an excellent article on French poetry, of several suggestions in which I have availed myself, in vol. xxxvii. of the 'Edinburgh Review,' p. 407.

guages more truly popular in their growth, and which are highly favourable to poetical effect. It was too precise, too polished, too artificial in its structure for those free outpourings of imagination and passion which in other languages have winged the soul of song. The result was such as might have been expected—melodious and polished versification, an almost faultless purity of style and diction, and a poetry which charmed the ear and pleased the mind, but failed almost entirely to touch the heart. This poetry, indeed, in some, but those not the higher departments, attained to an almost unrivalled excellence, and possessed peculiar graces and fascinations all its own. The elegance of its light and playful productions it would be difficult to equal, perhaps impossible to surpass. In epigram, too, in satire, and in fable, it reached the highest points of eminence. Boileau, who, as a satirist, was Pope's model, was, if not superior, at all events in no degree inferior to his English rival. In fable La Fontaine stands alone, and, it may be added, easily supreme. France, too, may well be proud of having produced such poets as Molière and Corneille, but they spoke rather to the head than to the heart.

Prior and the poets of the time of the Restoration,*

* School of France, introduced after the Restoration—Waller, Dryden, Addison, Prior, and Pope—which has continued to our own times.—T. Gray, Letter to T. Warton; Mant's Life of T. Warton, lxi.

when, under the influence of the foreign taste of the Court, poetry went astray in the direction of French models, have never maintained a lasting hold on the English heart. They failed to turn aside the poetical taste of their countrymen from its older and far more legitimate and national channel. Prior, indeed, did much for the general improvement both of style and language in our English writers, and emulated, not without success, the colloquial ease, pleasantry, and point of his French prototypes ; but he did little for genuine English poetry—the poetry of nature and of the heart. His ‘Henry and Emma’ is an unimpassioned piece of tedious though graceful versification. Its pagan machinery is out of place in a dialogue between a lover and his mistress, and happily he was one of the last of the race of poets who relied on such machinery for ornament and effect.* In France such machinery has been extensively employed, down even to a recent date, by writers of what is called the classical school. André Chénier, in his beautiful poem entitled ‘The Young Captive,’ makes a young girl in prison speak of Pales,† the goddess of sheepfolds among the

You have admirably characterized the poets of Charles II.’s age in your preface to the ‘*Theatrum Poetarum*.’—Southey’s Letter to Sir E. Brydges, Autob. of Sir E. B., ii. 278.

* Campbell’s *Essay on Poetry*, p. 252.

† In my published translation of that poem I have taken the liberty of substituting “Nature” for Pales.

Romans, of whom probably she had never heard. Venus and Mars, Jupiter and Juno, Mercury, Cupid, and Diana, are all very well in the poetry of the Greeks and Romans, and may not inappropriately figure even in the love strains of Tibullus, but in French and English poetry they are entirely out of place. Prior and the writers of his school did not, as I have said, maintain their place, or perpetuate their influence, among the poets of the land. Thomson with Cowper* and others led back English poetry to the source of her earliest, truest, and noblest inspiration, Nature.

Lamartine is one of those who have sought, as I have said, and not unsuccessfully, to effect a revolution in the poetical taste of France—to bring back Nature from her too protracted exile to the warm and genial world of song. Like Victor Hugo, he belongs to the romantic, as distinguished from what is called the classical school—which latter school they may be said to have overthrown. He was born in the year 1790 at Mâcon in the department of the Saône and Loire. His family name was De Prat, and he took the name of Lamartine after an uncle whose property he inherited in 1820. He has given us a history of his early days in a work which he has published, entitled, ‘Memoirs of my Youth,’ to which I must refer you for a full account of his early life and education. His

* Thomson, b. 1700, d. 1748; Cowper, b. 1731, d. 1800.

grandfather was an old gentleman who had served long as a cavalry officer in the armies of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. The possessor of a fine estate in the neighbourhood of his birthplace, he married a rich heiress of Franche Comté, who brought him as her dowry fair lands and extensive forests in the environs of St. Claude, and in the mountain gorges of Jura, not far from Geneva. He had six children, three sons and three daughters. The father of the poet was the youngest of this numerous family. He was placed in his father's regiment, and, according to the custom and prejudices of the age to which he belonged, as a younger son, he was destined never to marry—a destiny which circumstances changed. He had become acquainted, through his sister, who was a member of one of those chapters of noble canonesses which existed at that period in France, and which exist at the present day in Germany, with a lady to whom he was afterwards married. The name of the lady was Alise des Roys. Her father was comptroller-general of the finances to the Duke of Orleans. Her mother was under-governess to the children of that prince, and was also the favourite of that fair and virtuous Duchess of Orleans whom the Revolution respected while driving her from her palace, banishing her children into exile, and leading her husband to the scaffold. Being part of the household of the duke, they resided in the Palais

Royal in winter, and at St. Cloud during the summer months. Lamartine's mother was born at the latter place, and was brought up there with Louis Philippe, afterwards King of the French. When Voltaire, on the occasion of his last visit to Paris—a visit which was one of triumph—went to pay his respects to the princes of the house of Orleans, the mother of the poet, although then not more than seven or eight years old, was present at the interview, which left a deep impression on her mind. The father of the poet, who had not quitted the army at the time of his marriage, was personally attached to Louis XVI. He fought with the constitutional guard and the Swiss in defence of the château of the Tuilleries, in August, 1792. When the king had abandoned his dwelling the combat became a massacre, and the father of the poet was wounded by a gunshot in the palace-garden. He escaped, but was arrested while crossing the Seine in the palace-gardens opposite the Invalides, was conducted to Vaugirard, and imprisoned for a few hours in a cellar. He was however claimed and rescued by the gardener of one of his relations, who was then a municipal officer of the commune, and who recognised him by an almost miraculous accident. Having thus escaped death, he returned to his wife. He lived from that time in the deepest obscurity in his country retreat at Milly, on the banks of the Saône, which had been

assigned to him on his marriage, until the days when the revolutionary persecutions left no asylum (but a prison or a scaffold) for those who were attached to the ancient order of things. Of his subsequent arrest and confinement in the prison of Mâcon, and his liberation at the close of the Reign of Terror, after which he went to reside at Milly, the poet has given us in the Memoirs of his Youth a sketch most graphic and of painful interest. To these Memoirs, to which I am chiefly indebted for my account of the period which they comprise, I must refer you for further details. I have dwelt somewhat at length on the family history and social position of his mother, because it was at Milly, under her auspices, that the poet received his earliest instruction.

In the narrative which he has published of his travels in the East we find a very touching allusion to the “beautiful Bible of Royaumont,” which seems to have been a sort of heirloom in his family, and in which, as he there tells us, his mother taught him to read. The beautiful lines addressed by Mrs. Hemans to a family Bible, stirring thoughts which long had slept, will probably in connexion with this incident occur to many of my hearers.*

He soon became desirous of visiting the scenes with

* These are given in the seventh volume of Blackwood's edition of her works, page 243.

which he had in this way grown familiar, and the project which his young imagination had conceived he afterwards carried out in the maturity of manhood.

From Milly, which he has celebrated in song, he was sent to an establishment for education at Lyons, which he entered, he says, as a condemned criminal enters his cell. He was utterly unable to endure the restraints imposed upon him and the uncongenial habits of his companions. He ran away from school after an interval of a few months, but was overtaken and captured by the director of the establishment escorted by a gendarme. He was seized, his hands were bound, and he was conducted back to school, burning with shame and indignation, amidst a crowd of curious villagers who had gathered together to see him pass. He was then shut up alone in a sort of dungeon, where he passed two months, without communicating with any one except the head-master, who demanded from him a confession of his repentance, and subsequently sent him back to his parents. He was ill received by all the family, except his mother, who obtained a promise that he should not be sent back to Lyons. He was afterwards sent to a college directed by the Jesuits, at Belley, on the frontiers of Savoy. This establishment enjoyed at that time a high character, not only in France, but in Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. His mother accompanied him thither. He has paid, both

in his Memoirs and in the stanzas which bear the title of an ‘Adieu to the College of Belley,’ a high tribute to the kindness, the piety, the virtues, and educational skill of the inmates and directors of that establishment. On quitting the College of Belley he returned to Milly, and devoted himself to the study of such works as inclination from time to time suggested. He devoured, as he tells us, all the poems and all the romances in which love rose to the height of sentiment, to the ideal of an ethereal worship.

I must refer you to the published Memoirs of his Youth for the history and termination of his earliest love. The object of it was a young fair girl called Lucy (he has given us no other name), the daughter of a landowner in the neighbourhood of his father’s residence. I must refer you to the same source for an account of his visit to Italy, for the history, romantic incidents, and melancholy close of his attachment to Graziella, the beautiful daughter of an Italian fisherman. She had fallen in love with the poet, who lodged in her father’s house, and had shown the family some kindness. At the earnest request, however, of her family, she had suffered herself to be betrothed to a cousin, who was, with reference to his position in life, well off. As the nuptial day approached her heart failed her. She fled precipitately from her home, and attempted to take refuge in a convent. The poet was

summoned back to France ; but the shock it seems was too much for Graziella, who died soon afterwards, before the expiration of the period which had been fixed on for Lamartine's return to Italy. This attachment seems to have raised a severe conflict in the heart of the poet, between his worldly pride, the influences and prejudices of his social position, and his affections. As he was then but nineteen, and not probably in a position enabling him to marry, there is something, perhaps, to be said for him on the score of youth. He has spoken, however, in such strong terms of self-condemnation in his Memoirs, that he has saved his critics the necessity of pausing either to palliate or condemn.

In 1814 he entered the military household of Louis XVIII., like all the young men of his age whose families were associated by former recollections with the ancient monarchy. In his Memoirs he gives an interesting sketch of the events which followed Napoleon's return from Elba, and of the part which was borne by the writer himself in those occurrences. He speaks of that return as bringing back a military régime and tyranny, and considers it the result of an armed conspiracy, and not by any means of a national movement. He deplores the flexibility of a nation bending before successive régimes, and submitting to the despotism of the Empire. He speaks as a genuine

friend of liberty, and as one whom military successes, however brilliant, could not dazzle or lead astray.

His Memoirs contain an account of his subsequent visit to Switzerland,—of his return to Paris after the fall of the Empire to resume his duties in the body-guard of the king,—of the commencement of his diplomatic career when that guard was disbanded,—of his friendships with Aymon de Virieu and Louis de Vignet, and his acquaintance with Joseph de Maistre, the author of the celebrated ‘Evenings of St. Petersburg.’ He then glances at an interval of two years in his life during which he says that gaming at Milan, Paris, and Naples had been his principal occupation, and in which he made no notes, since, had he made them, he would have had nothing to describe save irregularities, faults, and misfortunes. He gives a sketch of the life and habits of the Abbé Dumont, the curate of the village of Bussières, the parish to which Milly belonged, and concludes a volume, which contains many passages of interest and beauty, by new allusions to the fate of Graziella, the subject to him of bitter and sorrowful remorse.

The ‘Meditations’ are the first and most remarkable of Lamartine’s poetical productions. On these, together with the ‘Harmonies,’ some minor pieces, detached passages, and lyrics scattered throughout his longer poems, his fame as a poet must depend. Notwithstand-

ing the great beauties of the ‘*Meditations*,’ Lamartine had some difficulty in finding any person willing to become the publisher of them. At length, however, a publisher was found, and the poems appeared at Paris in 1820. The name of the author was withheld, but the success which they met with is said to have been more brilliant than had been obtained in France by any writer of the age subsequently to the publication of the ‘*Genius of Christianity*’ by Châteaubriand. It is mentioned in the ‘*Gallery of Illustrious Contemporaries*’ that 45,000 copies of the ‘*Meditations*’ were sold within four years from the time at which they were first published. The immense popularity of the ‘*Meditations*’ was chiefly due, no doubt, to their intrinsic merit, but intrinsic merit would hardly alone explain success so sudden and unprecedented. Without detracting anything from the merit of the poems or from the beauties with which they abound throughout, it must be admitted that they owed something to the circumstances of the age in which they made their appearance and their well-judged adaptation to them. They satisfied a want, inarticulate perhaps, but deeply felt and far extended—a want arising in those tender, loving souls which the cold analytical and materialistic tendencies of the eighteenth century had chilled almost into despair—the want of those who longed to rise upon the warm and genial breath of song from the

stern realities of the visible world of sense, to the truths, ideal beauties, and delights of that world which is spiritual and unseen.

The influence of Saint Martin and others on the genius and writings of the poet has been eloquently touched upon by Sainte Beuve in his collection of *Contemporary Portraits*. He quotes a passage from Saint Martin, which seems, he says, to be a prelude to the '*Harmonies*' of Lamartine. Rousseau too, as well as Bernardin de St. Pierre, Madame de Staël, and Châteaubriand, exercised, beyond all question, a powerful influence on his mind and poetry. The tendencies of all were spiritual, and in the direction of that bright and beautiful dreamland to which in every age and country enthusiastic and tender souls aspire.

The '*Meditations*' comprise, with other poems, the '*Address to Lord Byron*', '*The Gulf of Baiæ*', '*Autumn*', '*Evening*', and '*The Lake*'. These poems are much admired in France, and are considered, indeed, the gems of his entire poetical works, but '*The Lake*' is perhaps the most popular of them all. Its popularity has been greatly increased by the beautiful music of Neidermeyer, with which it has long been inseparably united.

The '*Meditations*' are characterised by great elevation of sentiment, a sweet and soothing religious melancholy, a dreamy vagueness of thought and feeling highly favourable to poetical effect. They are full of tender-

ness and spiritualized affection, and the melancholy which gives them their prevailing tone never breaks out into bitterness or misanthropy, never lapses into despair. The strains are strains of love, though touched by sorrow into beauty, and falling dirge-like on the heart. The tints which charm the eye are most commonly tints autumnal—the torch of hope burns brightly, though it burns, for the most part, over funeral piles. The falling leaf, the mouldering fane, the withered hope, the love which suffered shipwreck—young love's too frequent fate—the clouds with which memory will sometimes overshadow the sombre landscape of the past—are the objects and the themes with which the poet's soul seems most readily to vibrate in harmonious unison. The following stanzas, which occur in the lines on ‘Autumn’ to which I have before alluded, will at once illustrate these remarks :*—

“Hail! woods, whose ling'ring verdure Autumn spares,
And yellow leaves upon the greensward thrown ;
Hail! last bright days; the garb which Nature wears
Bespeaks a grief harmonious with my own.

* * * * *

I love the autumnal hours ; when Nature dies,
Her shrouded looks have charms unknown before ;
Like friend's farewell, or parting smile that flies
O'er lips which death soon seals for evermore.

* * * * *

* This and the five following extracts are taken from my Translations of a few of Lamartine's best poems, published some years since with a small collection of other poems.

Earth, sun, vales—beauties which in Nature meet—
 I weep to quit you for the tomb's repose;
 So pure the daylight seems, the air so sweet,
 The sun so bright to eyes that soon shall close.

* * * * *

The wild flowers, as they fade, perfume the gale,
 And life and light with farewell odours greet;
 And I too perish, and my soul exhale,
 Like dying sound, most sorrowful, most sweet."

* * * * *

In his poem of 'The Lake' too we find him breathing strains of sweet but sorrowful affection, and alluding with plaintive tenderness to Elvira—Elvira, that mysterious object of a real, or, possibly, an ideal love, who has thrown indeed a shadow, but a shadow soft and beautiful, over the whole of his poetic life. Side by side with Dante's Beatrice—with the Laura of Petrarch—with Leonora the beloved of Tasso—the Elvira of Lamartine will hereafter take her place in the poetry of France. In the poem just mentioned he alludes as follows to the night when last he sought together with Elvira the borders of that lake whose beauties his verse perpetuates :—

"O envious Time! alas! that hours, when love
 Brings joy more pure than words may e'er express,
 Should in their transit not less fleeting prove
 Than hours of wretchedness!"

Lake! silent rocks! grots! woods of shadowy green!
 Which time hath spared, or shall again renew!
 Guard the remembrance of that night, fair scene,
 And let it live with you!

Live in the calm, and in the tempest's shocks,
 Fair lake, 'mid hills where now bright suns are shining,
 Live in those gloomy pines and unhewn rocks
 Now to thy breast inclining !

Live in the gales that murmur as they go,
 In all the voices of thy echoing shore ;
 In stars which on thy waters, as they flow,
 Their soft effulgence pour !

Let winds that moan, and waving reeds that sigh,
 And balmy gales that haunt the perfumed grove,
 Let all that meets the ear, the breath, the eye,
 Tell of our earthly love ! ”

In his poem on the ‘Gulf of Baiæ’ we find him still pursuing, though on a different theme, his train of melancholy reflections :—

“ Now night hath veil'd the boundless deep,
 And circling shades have gather'd round ;
 The shores are hid, the murmurs sleep,
 And rest prevails and calm profound.
 At this rapt hour, in thoughtful mood,
 Pale Melancholy loves to brood
 On shores where silence reigns ;
 Or seeks with meditative eyes,
 On gently-sloped acclivities,
 Yon mould ring towers and fanes.
 Liberty's ancient, sacred home wast thou,
 Fair land, where loftiest virtue dwelt of yore !
 Unworthy Cæsars trample on thee now,
 Thy throne is fall'n, thy heroes are no more ! ”

In his poem entitled ‘Man,’ that magnificent ex-postulation which he addressed to his brother poet Byron, we find him again recurring to his favourite and frequent theme, an early sorrow-stricken love :—

“ One being yet was left me—one alone ;
 Together by thy hand our lives were thrown,
 And our two spirits into one had grown ;
 She from my arms was prematurely taken,
 As from its branch the unripe fruit is shaken.
 This blow, design’d to wound me to the core,
 Was slowly dealt, that I might feel it more.
 In features where with death affection waged
 Unequal strife, I saw my doom presaged :
 I saw in her last looks life’s sacred light,
 Which seem’d but now in death’s embrace less bright,
 With love’s warm breath burn brightly as before,
 Then fondly cried : O Heaven ! one respite more !
 E’en as the captive, ’mid the dungeon’s gloom,
 And the dark horrors of his living tomb,
 Near the last torch that e’er shall blaze for him,
 Hangs o’er its light and sees the flame grow dim,
 I watch’d to seize her spirit as it parted,
 And in her latest look still sought it broken-hearted !
 The sigh, O God ! to thy pure bosom sped,
 With which from earth my hope’s last promise fled !
 Pardon despair if then it dared blaspheme !
 Repentant I adore the Power supreme,
 Which made the waves to flow, the sun to burn,
 The winds to sweep, humanity to mourn.”

* * * *

The opening part of this poem has been much admired in France, and in England has been considered very powerful and striking by judges whose opinion is of great value. After a few words by way of introduction Lamartine addresses Byron as follows :—

“ Night is thy dwelling, Horror thy domain,
 Like thee the indignant eagle scorns the plain,
 Soars to the rocks which lift their crags to Heaven,
 By winter blanch’d, and by the thunder riven,
 Or seeks the wreck that strews the billowy shore,
 Or fields that slaughter stains with black’ning gore ;

And while the bird, which sings its grief to rest,
On flowery margin builds its tranquil nest,
He to the horrid Athos mounts on high,
And hangs o'er dark abyss his aëry.
Alone, 'mid limbs still tremulous with life,
And beetling crags with blood and carnage rife,
Cheer'd by the victims' cries that round him sweep,
And rock'd by storms, he sinks in savage sleep.
Like art thou to this brigand of the air,
The strains thou lov'st are wailings of despair,
Ill is thy spectacle, thy victim man ;—
Thou, like the fiend, hast dared the abyss to scan,
And far from scenes where light and Godhead dwell,
Hast bid to hope eternally farewell."

It would be difficult, I think, to find in any poetry a passage more sustained in energy or more elevated in feeling than that in which, at the conclusion of this generous expostulation, he summons Byron to a nobler use of those exalted faculties with which Nature had unsparingly endowed him :—

“ Thou, whose strains control
Each quick vibration of the sentient soul,
Byron, draw from it floods of harmony !
Genius was made Truth's minister to be.
Oh ! if, by tears subdued, thy lute should borrow
From thy inspiring touch the hymn of sorrow ;
Or if, resolved from night's dark shades to spring,
Like some fall'n angel thou should'st plume thy wing,
And, soaring upwards, with attendant fires,
Sit once again among the heavenly choirs ;
Ne'er would the breathings of celestial sphere,
Or harps, which e'en the Godhead loves to hear,
Or voices loud, which mingling seraphs raise,
Have gladden'd Heav'n with nobler songs of praise.
Courage ! fall'n scion of a race divine,
High origin adorns that brow of thine !

None looketh on thee, but at once must own
 Those beams, though clouded, come from Heav'n alone.
 Lord of immortal verse, awake, arise !
 To night's dark brood leave doubt and blasphemies ;
 Spurn the false homage which corruption brings ;
 From Virtue's soil alone true glory springs.
 Resume thy splendour, and assert thy right
 Amid that glorious progeny of light,
 Which, issuing from the breath of Heav'n above,
 Was sent on earth to sing, believe, and love ! ”

It may be interesting here, though not strictly in accordance with chronological arrangement, to allude to a poem published by Lamartine in 1825, entitled ‘The Last Canto of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage.’ In this poem Lamartine conducts the pilgrimage of Byron under the name of Harold to its close. Without entering at present on the merits of this poem, I shall refer only to one part of it, which consists of the following energetic apostrophe to Italy :—

“ Farewell ! sweet Italy, thy cherish’d shore
 These disenchanted eyes behold no more !
 Land of the past, what doth the pilgrim here ?
 When eye hath measured arch and ruin drear,
 And sought proud names inscribed on funeral urns,
 Vainly its gaze towards the living turns !
 All sleeps, e’en memory of historic fame,
 While bygone glory prompts the blush of shame.
 All sleeps ! yet active cares the world engage—
 All else hath felt the spirit of the age.
 Scythian and Breton from their countries wild,
 By glorious name to thy fair shores beguil’d,
 Thy cities view but with contemptuous eyes,
 Nor glory’s home ’mid ruins recognise.
 They turn to Temple and Triumphal Gate,
 Colossal Arch and palaces of state,

And vainly and with mockery stern demand
For whom such mighty monuments were plann'd !
Would Nation here some Cæsar's triumph grace ?
Or, doth its shadow fill the glorious space ?
No more within thee shame's emotions rise,
To barbarous insolence a smile replies.
Of glory's star thou barterest many a ray,
And thy own hands with dastard pride display
The soil where heroes' footprints linger still ;
Walls, which their names with empty echoes fill
Marbles, which yet barbarian hands deface ;
Proud busts, contrasted with degenerate race ;
Superfluous fruits, which mark thy favour'd lot,
And suns which o'er thee shine—but know thee not.
Blush then ! yet no—the trifler's fame embrace ;
Exult—soft strains thy Capitol disgrace.
Faint hand no more Rome's badge of empire wields,
To lyre and brush the iron sceptre yields ;
The siren's art perfidious joys prolongs,
And lends new sweetness to Armida's songs.
Thy colours life-like o'er the canvas flow,
Blandusian marbles 'neath thy chisel glow,
And sculptured traits of heroes old proclaim
Thy bygone greatness and thy present shame.
The uncouth grandeur of thy language fails ;
Its tuneful melody alone prevails ;
Thy chains have sapp'd its power and accents grave,
Tis sweet as flattery, treacherous as a slave,
And like the serpent, which with sinuous coil
Pursues the miry windings of the soil,
It stoops, 'neath lengthen'd slavery, and lends
The lure of beauty to the worst of ends.
Enfeebled strains in barren accents roll
To flatter sense and enervate the soul.
Fall'n pile ! where Echo dwells in lonely state !
Dust of the past, which dry winds dissipate !
Ill-fated land ! where through degenerate sons
Ancestral blood in lifeless currents runs ;
Where man is born decrepit, and where steel
Aims but the blows which midnight shades conceal :

Where dark intent its veil of mystery flings
O'er brows to which congenial shadow clings ;
Where love is treachery, and shame pretence ;
Where guile usurps the look of innocence ;
Where nerveless words are but an empty sound,
A cloud which bursts, with echoes lingering round.
Go ! weep thy fall, thy heroes celebrate !
Where Glory's rays their bones resuscitate
In other climes (forgive me, shade of Rome !),
With men, not human dust, I seek a poet's home.”

The reflections on the degeneracy of the Italians, which this apostrophe contained, were so severe and cutting that they proved the occasion of a duel between the poet and Colonel Pepé, in which the former received a dangerous wound. The Italy of the present day, with Piedmont at its head, must be referred to in far other language. It deserves not only honourable mention, but the encouragement and support of every country in which intelligence, and patriotism, and the love of liberty, can command respect and admiration.

I return, however, to the ‘Poetical Meditations.’ The stanzas entitled ‘The Dying Poet’ are said to have been written during sickness, when the poet, perhaps, thought that he was singing his own dirge. The lines on Bonaparte show in how unfavourable a light Lamartine had viewed his character. Severely indeed does he reproach him with the murder of the unfortunate Duc d’Enghien :—

"Thou didst grow great," he exclaims, addressing him, "without delight, and didst fall without a murmur; beneath thy thick armour there was nothing human beating; thou knewest not hate nor love, but didst live for thought alone. Like the eagle that reigns in the solitude of the sky, thou hadst but a look with which thou mightest measure earth, and talons with which thou mightest embrace it. What sudden fright is this, and why dost thou turn aside from me thy startled look? Whence proceeds the paleness that is spread over thy brow? What hast thou seen suddenly amid the horrors of the past? Is it the smoking ruins of twenty cities? or is it some field of battle that foams with human blood? All this thy glory has effaced! Glory effaces everything—everything save crime. But his finger pointed out to me the body of a victim, a young man—a hero, weltering in pure blood. The wave which bore it kept passing and repassing, and ever as it passed him its avenging waters threw up to him the name of Condé."

The pervading melancholy which tinges not only the 'Meditations,' but the entire poetry of Lamartine, appears to have had its source in the remembrances of crushed affections. The grave would seem to have engulfed the objects of his early love; and here it may be mentioned that at later periods of his checkered and eventful life his domestic affections were doomed to undergo trials equally severe. His mother, whom he loved with tenderness, met her death

by a lamentable accident. He has paid a graceful tribute to her memory in the poem entitled ‘A Mother’s Tomb,’ and also in some more touching, because more natural and simple verses, which occur in his poem entitled ‘Jocelyn.’ His only daughter, by a marriage of which I shall have occasion to speak presently, died while travelling with him in the East, but her gentle influence still wakes to life and beauty in the stanzas on the Death of Julia. We must also bear in mind, with reference to the pervading sadness of his song, the circumstances of the times in which he was born, and which must have formed frequently the subject of conversation in the domestic circle. He was rocked in the cradle of revolution. In the Memoirs of his Youth he refers to the moment at which his aged relatives were hurried off in a cart, amid the hootings of a savage populace, and at which, as he informs us, persecution entered his home, never again to leave it till after the death of Robespierre.*

“The populace came one night,” he observes, “and tore from their dwelling my grandfather, notwithstanding his 84 years of age, my grandmother almost equally aged and infirm, my two uncles, and my three aunts, the nuns, who had already been driven from their convents. The whole family were thrown pellmell into a cart escorted by gendarmes, and were conducted,

* Memoirs, p. 34.

amidst the hooting and savage shouts of the populace, to Autun. There an immense prison had been prepared to receive all the suspected persons of the province. By an exception, of the cause of which he was ignorant, my father was separated from the rest of the family, and confined in the prison of Mâcon. My mother, who was then suckling me, was left alone in my grandfather's immense mansion, under the surveillance of some soldiers of the revolutionary army. And yet persons are astonished that the men whose life dates back to these gloomy days have imparted a tinge of sadness and an impress of melancholy to the literature of France. Virgil, Cicero, Tibullus, Horace himself, who imprinted this character on the genius of Rome, were they not born like us during the great civil wars of Rome, and amidst the noise of the proscriptions of Marius, of Scylla, and of Cæsar ? Think of the impressions of terror or of pity which agitated the bosoms of the Roman matrons whilst they carried these men in their wombs. Think of the milk, rendered bitter by tears, which I myself drew from the breast of my mother whilst our whole family was in captivity (a captivity which for some was to be ended only by death)—whilst the husband whom she adored was upon the steps of the scaffold—and whilst she was herself a captive in her deserted abode, ferocious soldiers playing the spy upon her tears, to charge her with her tenderness as a crime, and to insult her sorrow!"

In compliance with the wishes of his family Lamartine determined to take the opportunity which the success of his poetical efforts afforded him of obtaining

an honourable employment. He chose the diplomatic career, and was made Attaché to the embassy at Florence. It was in Italy, where he remained some time as secretary of embassy at different Courts, that he is said, in the midst of a scene of social gaiety, to have heard a stranger's voice full of melody and tenderness repeating the following lines, which occur in the poem before alluded to, entitled ‘Autumn :’—

“Perchance within the future’s gloom is set
The now unhopèd-for light of joy’s return ;
And some fond heart, to mine unknown as yet,
May still with soft responsive passion burn.”

The language of the poet’s soul had found its echo in another ; and the stranger, who was an English lady, subsequently became his wife. Her name was Mary Ann Eliza Birch. It has been remarked by Sainte Beuve that literary reputation, a rich inheritance, and a marriage in conformity with his tastes, became the poet’s portion almost at the same time.

The new ‘Poetical Meditations,’ and the poem entitled ‘The Death of Socrates,’ appeared in 1823 ; ‘The last Canto of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage,’ to which I have before alluded, in 1825. The ‘Chant du Sacre,’ the subject of which was the Coronation of Charles X., was published in the same year as the last-mentioned production. This poem, as originally published, contained some lines which displeased the

Duke of Orleans, afterwards King of the French, by the allusion which they contained to the conduct of the Duke his father. On this subject a negociation is said to have taken place, in consequence of which Lamartine consented to sacrifice the lines in question. These verses, therefore, did not appear in the second edition, or rather in the second impression of the poem ; and almost the whole of the first impression is said to have been purchased of the printer, M. Tastu, that it might be at once destroyed. The passages thus omitted were as follows :—

The archbishop, in calling upon the king to name the twelve peers who were to be his sureties for the observance of his oaths, remarks—

“ And this prince, leaning on his brilliant armour, who, with his eyes fixed upon this group of children, contemplates this hope with pride ? ” The king replies,—“ D’Orleans ! This great name is shielded by the forgiveness of my brother : the son has redeemed his father’s arms ! and, like shoots from a tree which is still fruitful, seven branches have concealed the wounds of the trunk.”

The ‘ Harmonies, Poetical and Religious,’ were published in 1829. On the death of M. Daru, which occurred in the same year, Lamartine was chosen to fill the vacancy thus occasioned among the members of the French Academy. His reception took place on

the 1st of April, 1830, and the illustrious Cuvier was appointed to receive him. In the discourse which he delivered, according to custom, in honour of him whom he succeeded, the poet made some touching allusions to the death of his mother, which event had happened only a few days before the election of her son to the Academy. The poetical tributes which he paid to her memory have been before referred to.

It was in this year, a most eventful one for France, that he published his pamphlet entitled ‘The Politics of Reason.’ In the preface to his published speeches he refers not, he says, his friends, but his calumniators, to this pamphlet and to the sentiments which it contains. “They will see,” he continues, “that I have followed but one course; that conscience was my starting-point, and my end that progress which is possible under every form of government.”

Lamartine had accepted a diplomatic appointment conferred on him by Charles X. He was absent from France, and was about to start upon his mission as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Greece, when the Revolution of July, 1830, broke out. The new Government offered, it is said, to confirm the appointment; but Lamartine declined to receive it at their hands. It has been observed, that “after the three days the poet hoped, like Châteaubriand, for the alliance of the past and future upon the head of a child (the

Duke de Bordeaux); but that destiny decided otherwise."

"I went," he says, "at once to Paris to offer my resignation to the king, Louis Philippe. I sent it to M. Molé, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It was to the following effect:—'I accept as a fact, and as founded in justice, the revolution which has recently taken place. I am ready to serve my country as a citizen in the Chambers, or in any unpaid elective functions. I have served the dynasty which has fallen, but I could not disguise from myself its faults. I lament its misfortunes; but I do not wish, by remaining in the service of your Majesty, to appear to pass over from one government to another with the turn of fortune. I wish to take my stand upon the ground not of opposition but of independence.' The king read this letter in Council, and was not offended at it. He handed it to his son the Duke of Orleans, saying, 'Read it; this is what I call a resignation honourably given.' He read it himself to Monsieur Laffitte, who approved of its language. 'Tell M. de Lamartine,' added the king, turning to M. Molé, 'to come and see me as he used to do. I shall still entertain the same kind sentiments towards him.' M. Molé communicated to me on the following day these particulars, and this invitation. I told M. Molé that I was very much touched by, and very grateful for, the king's remarks; but I added, 'I shall not go to Court. It might be imagined that I went to ask for favour, although I went but to refuse it. I shall therefore abstain from every kind of intercourse or connexion with the new dynasty.'"

Having paid to great misfortunes the tribute of his sympathy, he frankly embraced the new order of things :—

“The past,” said he, “is now only a dream: it is allowable to regret it, but not to waste one’s time in uselessly lamenting it. It is always permitted, it is always honourable, to take one’s share in the misfortunes of another, but it is not right to take a share in a fault which one has not committed. I loved,” he said also, “that ancient family of the Bourbons, because they had had the affection and the blood of my father and my relatives, and because, had they required it, they might have had mine too. The Revolution of July has not, however, provoked me to bitterness, for it has not taken me by surprise. I have seen it coming from afar; nine months before the fatal day, the fall of the monarchy was written in the names of the men to whom its conduct was intrusted. These men were devoted and faithful, but they belonged to another era and another mode of thinking; while the spirit of the age was marching in one direction, they were marching in another: the separation was complete in men’s minds, and could not be far distant in their acts; it had become a question of days and hours. I have wept for this family, which seemed condemned to the fate and to the blindness of an *Œdipus*.”

The first attempts of Lamartine to obtain a seat in the Chamber of Deputies were unsuccessful; for the electors of Dunkirk refused him as their representative. The unjust and bitter satire which the poet Barthélemy

addressed to him on this subject, in the number of the ‘Némésis’ which appeared on the 3rd of July, 1831, drew from him the remarkable poem which he published entitled ‘A Némésis.’ It was during the period which immediately preceded the election at Dunkirk that he paid a visit to England :—

“ M. de Talleyrand was at that time,” he informs us, “the French ambassador in London. He carried with him thither,” he continues, “the whole weight of the diplomacy of Europe, and constituted in himself a congress. I saw him often; I admired him when at his work, and ever respected him. His life had been devoted to ambition and to pleasure; he consecrated his old age to the task of reconciling France and England, and of promoting the interests of peace. His thoughts on this head were identical with mine. During his mornings I often talked with him on the critical state of the world. He urged me to return to the career of diplomacy. I told him what my scruples were. He endeavoured to overcome them by state considerations, but I adhered to them from motives of honour.”

In 1832 Lamartine put into execution the project before alluded to of visiting the East. He was accompanied by several persons, including his wife and his daughter Julia—the latter of whom died, as has been mentioned, during his travels.

When in Syria he paid a visit to Lady Hester Stanhope, who prophesied his future greatness. “ You may

believe what you will," said she to him, "but you are nevertheless one of the men whom I expected, whom Providence sends me, and who have a great part to accomplish in the work which is preparing. You will soon return to Europe; Europe is worn out; France alone has still a high mission to accomplish. In that mission you will share. I know not yet in what capacity; but, if you wish it, I can tell you to-night, when I have taken counsel of our stars." The "work which was to be accomplished in Europe" had long been the "fixed presentiment" of Lady Hester Stanhope.

In 1833 Lamartine received in Syria the intelligence that he had been elected Deputy for Hondschoot and Bergues, in the Department of the North. He returned to France in the same year, and when asked by one of his friends, on the day before that on which he took his seat in the Chamber, where he should sit, he said: "On the ceiling." He had resolved, as he himself informs us, to be impartial. "The nature of my mind," he adds, "inclined me to take from every party the truth which it seemed to possess, without adopting either its passions, its ambition, or its mistakes. It was a thankless task in a time of revolution. I resigned myself to it without disguising from myself the unpopularity into which on all sides I was sure to fall." In 1834, in the discussion on the address, he delivered his maiden speech upon the Eastern question.

In the debate which took place on the 8th of May, 1834, on the subject of education, Lamartine alluded to the vast power of the press, and pointed out the necessity of providing a field for the intelligence of the public. He then proceeded to make the following observations on the shortcomings of the Revolution of July :—

“ Every revolution owes something to the people, and only becomes legitimate by its works. Has not the Revolution of July forgotten the tribute which, in its turn, it owes to France as well as to humanity ? Bold to rashness in the day of combat, timid and petty after victory, it hesitates to take on any vital question such initiatives as the age or as genius would suggest. It is warned by sinister catastrophes ; it represses with energy, but it rectifies nothing, and suffers to accumulate in the social system the waves of vice, corruption, and aggression—one of which in the end may swallow up itself and society together. The fearless love of good is wanting ; let us try to kindle it in the country.”

His speech on this occasion drew forth a reply from Guizot, then Minister of Public Instruction, who rose to repel the charges brought against the Revolution of July of having broken its promises and neglected the great moral interests of the country. At the elections which took place in the same year, Lamartine was returned for Bergues, and also for Mâcon, his native town. He, however, determined to sit for Bergues—a compliment which he considered justly due to a con-

stituency with which he had not any local connexion, and whose political adoption of him had been spontaneous.

His political avocations did not cause him to abandon his literary pursuits. In 1835 he gave to the world the account of his ‘Journey in the East,’ and this was followed in 1836 by the poem entitled ‘Jocelyn,’ a journal found in the abode of a village curate. The writer in the ‘Gallery of Illustrious Cotemporaries,’ in speaking of this poem, describes it as a magnificent picture of passion sacrificed to duty. ‘Jocelyn,’ as the author informs us, is not a poem, but an episode. It is a fragmentary portion of a so-called epic, of which the subject is human life, and of which the poet intended, if sufficiently encouraged, to present from time to time fresh portions to the public. Of its projected length it is difficult to form a conception, as the fragment is sufficiently voluminous to terrify ordinary readers. In its present shape it consists of a Prologue, of nine Epochs with an Epilogue, and a supplemental Epilogue written by way of variation. It is moreover ushered in by a Dedication, a new Preface, an Advertisement or general Notice, and a Postscript. These constitute an array of materials which are quite alarming to an unhappy critic who has either to read them through, or to hazard a false judgment on that which he has never read. Another fragment of this vast epic, entitled ‘The Fall

of an Angel,' has been published ; but I confess that I have never read it. 'Jocelyn' I could never have read through from beginning to end, if it had not been that I had promised to give a lecture on the life and writings of the author. It contains many passages of great beauty ; but as a whole I am unable to admire it. It is so tedious and prolix, that, when the author tells us at the conclusion of some one or other of its countless fragments that many pages are here wanting in the MS., one cannot but feel inclined to congratulate the poet and the literary world on the loss they have sustained. It is marked, too, when viewed as a whole, by poverty of thought and incident, which its extreme length renders the more obvious. Its descriptions are often very beautiful ; but they are overcharged with detail, and grow monotonous through repetition. The similes are frequently prosaic, poor, inappropriate, and altogether beneath the dignity of the subject. Its tale may be briefly told as follows :—Jocelyn is a youth who, to enable his sister to marry, gives up his portion of the humble family property and becomes the inmate of a seminary. On the dispersion of the members at the outbreak of the Revolution, Jocelyn takes refuge in a cave, called the Eagle's Grotto, situate amid the Alps of Dauphiné. Here he subsists on bread, which is supplied to him by a shepherd. Some time afterwards he sees two strangers flying from two soldiers and

taking the direction of his cave. He points out to the former the natural bridge over which lies the only road to his hiding-place. Firelocks are discharged, the elder fugitive is shot, but has managed simultaneously to shoot his two pursuers. The younger fugitive, Laurence, is consigned to the care of Jocelyn, and becomes his constant companion and his friend. At length a violent storm occurs, and Jocelyn, on his return to his cave, misses his companion, goes in search of him, and finds him fallen and injured. He carries him back to his cave, and, on commencing to dress his wounds, discovers that his companion is a woman. It is needless to say that love succeeds to friendship ; but this gives rise to a severe conflict in the mind of Jocelyn between his affection and the obligation of celibacy incident to his ecclesiastical calling, and it is upon this point that the chief interest of the poem turns. A summons from the Bishop of Grenoble, who is about to die on the scaffold, brings matters to a crisis. Jocelyn tells the bishop the story of his love, and pleads with some eloquence in its favour. The bishop holds over him the authority of the Church. Jocelyn gives way, and is consecrated a priest ; an exciting scene ensues between Laurence and Jocelyn, and they part to meet only on the verge of the grave. Laurence goes to Paris, and is married ; but the marriage does not prove a happy one. She becomes a widow at twenty, and gives herself up to a life

of gaiety and dissipation. Jocelyn sees her accidentally at Paris, is grieved at her course of life, and returns to seek consolation in the duties of a village pastor. Some time afterwards he is summoned to the death-bed of a person who is dying in a village near at hand, while on her way to Italy. That person proves to be Laurence. Jocelyn makes himself known to her. She dies soon afterwards, and leaves him all her property. Jocelyn buries her body in the cave, the scene of their ill-fated love, and thither some years afterwards the sympathizing villagers carry the remains of Jocelyn. The story and its incidents are in the last degree improbable, though they have been said to be almost an actual narrative. The poet indeed tells us in his 'Memoirs' that one of the misfortunes of the youth of the Abbé Dumont inspired him with the idea of Jocelyn. Subsequently, however, he says that he has described in Jocelyn, under the name of an imaginary personage, that concentrated warmth of soul, that pious enthusiasm displayed in outpourings of the thoughts, in aspirations and in tears of adoration before God, which he experienced during the burning years of youth in a religious establishment.

I have spoken of the defects of 'Jocelyn:' I wish that time permitted me to lay before you specimens more numerous than I can venture to present of the beautiful passages which it contains. The splendours of the

Alpine landscape, with its attendant features of avalanche and storm—the disquietudes incident to a period of convulsion such as that of the first French Revolution—the sense of isolation—the longings for a heart responsive, not unnatural under the circumstances in which Jocelyn, the hero of the poem, was placed—the endearments and affections of domestic life—the touching traits of filial and maternal love to which the seventh epoch is devoted—the habits, cares, and occupations belonging to the life of a village pastor,—are subjects which Lamartine has handled in some of the passages with great felicity and power. It is not easy to find descriptive passages suited for quotation, as they are extended to a great length. I must, however, call your attention particularly to the concluding lines of a poem on the Rainbow, and some exquisite stanzas on the Nightingale. Jocelyn, having described the rainbow, with its varying effects of light and colour, concludes as follows with a graceful and tender apostrophe to his companion Laurence :—

“ Is it a bridge that angels tread ?
O Thou that sufferest mortal eyes
To see Thy wondrous works outspread !
Is it a pathway to the skies ?
Loved Laurence, would that I had wings
To mount where yonder bright arch springs,
Its radiant heights to climb !
And led by angels’ power divine,
Eye fix’d on Heav’n, hand clasp’d in thine,
To pass o’er death and time.”

Laurence replies with the following beautiful lines on the Nightingale :—

“ See ! in her nest, yon nightingale
 Broods silently with anxious joy :
 Love spreads her wings, lest cold prevail,
 And all her coming bliss destroy.

Her neck o’erhangs, through watchfulness,
 The shell in which her hope reposes,
 And slight sounds rouse from weariness
 That beauteous eye which slumber closes.

Her feathery down my voice hath stirr’d,
 Care for her young consumes her breast,
 We see the heart-throbs of the bird,
 Whose breathings shake her trembling nest.

What power constrains such tender care ?
 Her mate’s most tuneful minstrelsy—
 On oaken branch he sits, and there
 Pours forth his floods of melody.

Now drop by drop the stream distils,
 Soft sighs succeed to transports strong,
 Then the green canopy he fills
 With torrents of harmonious song.

A heart inspires him as he sings ;
 'Mid joys of sense a soul appears ;
 Now hymns of bliss to Heav’n he flings,
 Now mingles melody with tears.

Why shares he still, that branch above,
 The languor which his strains impart ?
 His sweet voice vibrates in his love,
 And falls upon an echoing heart.

The brooding bird his accents hears,
 And swift-wing’d hours unheeded fly ;
 The egg-shell bursts and life appears,
 All spring-tide, love, and melody.

Heav'n ! source of joy ! how fair and blest
Life's hours which to my bosom bring
Enough of love like her to rest,
Enough of bliss like him to sing !”

I shall not quote passages in illustration of the defects to which I have alluded, as it would not, I am sure, afford you any pleasure to hear them. For myself, too, I prefer the more congenial task of pointing out beauties in an author's works, and I shall conclude my notice of 'Jocelyn' by quoting the following tender passage, touchingly descriptive of the position of a mother relatively to her children :—

“ In mother's heart a twofold life reposes—
For when 'mid cares her past existence closes,
She sees a future full of hope and day
Around her children's radiant foreheads play ;
Affection seems her soul to multiply—
Pure love ! no dregs within thy chalice lie.”

JOCELYN, 8^{me} Ep., p. 227.

It was early in the year 1837 that the project of a law prescribing separate jurisdiction (*loi de disjonction*) in cases where citizens and soldiers should combine in an attempt against the security of the state, was presented by the ministry to the consideration of the Chamber. In the case of the military insurrection at Strasburg for the purpose of setting Louis Napoleon on the throne of France, the jury impanelled to try the offenders had given a verdict of acquittal, on the ground that the ministry had with-

drawn from justice the prince, who was the chief offender. The “*loi de disjonction*” was therefore introduced, in order that in future military offenders might be handed over to the councils of war, while civil offenders were left to be tried by ordinary tribunals. Lamartine spoke strongly in favour of the measure ; and the course which he took on this occasion has exposed him to many severe comments. The project had been powerfully attacked by M. Dupin, who pointed out its evils with great force and clearness. Lamartine maintained that an insurgent soldier who was guilty, in addition to a crime against the state, of a breach of discipline as well as a breach of trust, had no claim to be placed on the same footing as a mere insurgent citizen, whose offence was by no means attended with the same grave consequences to the country. He said that from popular revolutions liberty had sometimes sprung ; while military émeutes and revolutions had never been known to produce anything but disorder, anarchy, and servitude. He supported the law, not as a permanent rule of action, but only as a momentary measure, a “*coup d'état législatif*,” rendered necessary by the verdict of the jury in the case of the Strasburg insurrection. He summed up, he said in conclusion, his views in these few words : “ Popular revolutions at the last possible moment—military revolutions never ! ”

His dread of the military instincts of his countrymen, and his horror of their fanatical attachment to the recollections of military glory, would seem to have influenced his conduct on this occasion.

At the elections which took place in the same year Lamartine was a second time returned both for Bergues and Mâcon, but, having on a former occasion paid a compliment which he regarded as justly due to Bergues, he now determined to sit for Mâcon, as being his native town, though it had not been the first to do him honour.

On the 18th March, 1838, he spoke in the Chamber of Deputies in favour of the entire abolition of capital punishments. This cause he had previously advocated in a poem written at a time when popular indignation seemed to menace the lives of the ex-ministers of Charles X., and also in an eloquent speech delivered at the Hôtel de Ville in 1836, at a meeting convened for the consideration of that subject.

We now approach a period of great interest in the political career of Lamartine, and one of critical import also in the varying destinies of France. The political inquirer, as his glance rests for a time on the manœuvres of party, the intrigues of faction, and the ill-judged exercise of regal power, discerns new elements of danger for the state and even for monarchy itself. Fortunately we are not left to mere conjecture as

regards the course pursued by Lamartine at the period to which I am referring. That period was witness to the formation of the different ministries in which M. Molé played a distinguished and leading part, and to that heterogeneous combination of men and parties which towards the middle of 1838 arrayed itself against and finally overthrew the last administration formed under his auspices. To trace in outline the history of that time would involve the necessity of a minute acquaintance with the state of parties and with modern politics in France, to which, unfortunately, I can lay no claim. I may refer those who wish for more information on the subject to the volumes of the ‘Annual Register’ and the political and biographical sketch of M. Molé in Capefigue’s ‘European Diplomatists and Statesmen.’ The following particulars are taken from the preface to the published speeches of Lamartine, as I am anxious, under the circumstances and with reference to events so recent, to give the illustrious subject of these remarks the privilege of telling his own story, and as nearly as may be in his own words :—

“ The epoch of the Coalition arrived. The divers elements of opposition were leagued together in hostility to M. Molé, who, in his single person, represented for a time with dignity and talent the constitution and peace. I felt indignant at such a combination, which was evi-

dently either false or perverse, between parties which abhorred each other, and were united only to destroy. M. Guizot, M. Berryer, M. Thiers, M. Barrot, M. Du-faure, M. Garnier Pagès, were arrayed on one side, each followed by his party: M. Molé fought single-handed against them all. I was tempted by a sense of right, and by the general abandonment to which the Minister of the Amnesty was consigned. I spoke in support of M. Molé. I combated the opposition with all the zeal of a ministerialist, or of a person influenced by some ambitious object. I was, however, only acting a sincere and independent part.

“ The 221 deputies who resisted, almost without any recognised organ, the distinguished talents of the Coalition, and the assaults of the journals of the day, which are ever on the aggressive side, invited me to share their struggle.

“ M. de Girardin was at that time sustaining single-handed, in the columns of ‘The Press,’ the shock which I had to sustain at the tribune against the whole forces of the opposition. The 221 deputies mentioned above summoned me to a meeting at the house of General Jacqueminot. I was cordially and honourably received. They offered me the presidency. I refused it. I mounted on a chair and gave the reasons for my refusal.

“ I said, addressing my honourable colleagues, ‘I am with you, but I am not one of you. Like you, I am desirous of two things—that representative government should have free play, and that there should be sincerity even in opposition. I wish moreover to preserve the peace of Europe. On these points we agree; and I am

ready to oppose to the very utmost of my power falsehood in opposition and war in council. Conscience and the interests of the people are on our side, and I hope for a triumphant issue. On matters of domestic policy we entertain different opinions. You are Conservatives ; I a friend to progress. We shall separate on the morrow of that day on which we shall have vanquished the parliamentary coalition. Let us then unite only conditionally and for a time. If I did not speak thus openly I should deceive you, and you might some day taunt me with having abandoned my party. I prefer telling you this beforehand, and frankly. Consider me an auxiliary, but leave me without your pale. To-morrow perhaps I shall have to fight against you.' These words distressed them. They could not, however, do otherwise than appreciate my sincerity. My suggestion was adopted at once, and acted on. I carried on the struggle in their name side by side with M. Molé. The position he assumed, and the talents he displayed, raised him to a higher level. At first he triumphed by a small majority, but he was afterwards beaten by a few votes. I was summoned to attend the ministerial council which met at M. Molé's residence, in order to deliberate on the crisis. Was it best to resign or to dissolve the Chamber and appeal to the country ? That was the question asked. I did not hesitate to give an opinion ; and I can scarcely doubt that, had my advice been followed, the representative constitution would have been saved, and that the Revolution would have been prevented.

"I said to M. Molé, 'In my opinion you ought to resign. You ought to obey without contesting it the

established rule of representative government. Parliament places you in a minority; admit your defeat. Place victory in the hands of the Coalition—victorious for a day—and this victory will be its ruin. You will break it up by resigning power into its hands. The men who with repugnant views have just combined to vote against you—how will they combine in order to form a ministry? On the morrow they will tear each other in pieces. The confusion which exists in their hearts will be revealed in their actions. Republicans, Legitimists, Doctrinaires, aspirants to power—to what understanding will such parties come in order to form a cabinet out of chaos? Within the space of four-and-twenty hours the orators of these different parties will fall back one before the other. M. Guizot, M. Berryer, M. Garnier Pagès, M. Thiers, M. Barrot, M. Dufaure, may combine for a destructive, but can they combine for a reconstructive purpose? It would be the work of Babel over again! These incompatible elements will disunite of themselves. Those who are aiming only at places in the ministry will be repudiated by those who aim at giving effect to political views and opinions; while those who have only the latter object in view will be attacked by those who wish to clothe themselves with certain functions. Before a month has passed, the ministry which will succeed you will fall into contradictions and expose its weakness, will be in a minority, and scandalise the public. Like you, it will wish to dissolve the Chamber and appeal to the country. The country will pronounce indignantly against it; and the newly-elected Chamber, by placing you in a majority,

will testify to the justice of your cause, and to the estimation in which it holds you.

“ ‘ If, however, on the contrary, you rebel against the apparent though false expression of opinion which the majority of yesterday pronounced against you in parliament, the country will think that you are anxious to substitute the king’s will for its own. In its indignation it will return a hostile majority to the Chamber. The Crown’s prerogative will be overwhelmed by a ministry of ambitious and designing men. This ministry, in order to deceive at home, will play the part of agitator abroad, and drive Europe to the verge of war. If it declares war in a bad sense, and in such a wretched cause as the Egyptian question, all Europe will be in flames, and our navy will be destroyed.

“ ‘ If, however, it should recede at the firing of the first cannon, the diplomacy of France will be degraded throughout the world, and our alliances will all be thrown into the arms of England. The Government will lose much of its prestige, and will be forced to humble itself in order that men may be induced to pardon the provocations they have received. The spirit of Frenchmen cannot endure shame. Feelings of bitterness will arise between the Government and the country. Fortuitous circumstances will fan the smouldering embers of discontent, and the Coalition, through your faults, will have produced the progeny which even now it threatens to produce—Revolution. It rests with you to avert such a catastrophe.’

“ It appeared to me that M. de Montalivet was struck, and even alarmed, at the considerations which my re-

marks suggested. M. Molé, in a state of great anxiety, appeared to be looking out of the window, though evidently too much absorbed to notice anything. He seemed to be asking Heaven for a solution of the terrible problem which the crisis raised, and which I was pressing on his attention. He was tapping with his finger against the window, like a man who is in a state of impatience and hesitation. Unfortunately he no longer hesitated. He had made up his mind even before we began to deliberate. The Chamber was dissolved ; the ministry of 1840 was forced upon the Crown. This ministry raised, as I had predicted, the question of war. On the brink of the precipice it measured with its eye the depth of the abyss, and it recoiled. It was obviously influenced at that moment by one of those emotions of praiseworthy integrity which lead men to sacrifice self-love to conscience.

“ Although I have been almost invariably opposed to the policy of M. Thiers and of his friends, I thought that they evinced true morality of sentiment and lofty sacrifice of self-love in thus abdicating power which they could not longer retain without becoming the agitators of Europe. I had always rendered justice to the Writer : I now began to cherish a secret esteem for the Statesman. I repented having commented with too great severity at the tribune, and in the columns of the press, on the errors of the ministry of 1840.

“ The event which I had anticipated and announced beforehand to the 221 adherents of the reigning dynasty who had met at the house of General Jacqueminot at length occurred. When the time had come for making

political recompence, the Conservatives invited me to attend a meeting which was held at the house of M. Delessert. The question which the meeting had to consider was the election of a president of the Chamber of Deputies. Some seven or eight speakers addressed the meeting. They all held the same language ; it was to the following purport. ‘There is a person who has gratuitously fought our battles, who has sometimes saved us, and always done us honour. This person is M. de Lamartine. We owe him a brilliant recompence. The time for awarding it has come. The presidency of the Chamber, if we conferred it on him, would be at the same time a token of our esteem, and an appropriate recognition of his services. He has however sufficient generosity to allow us to nominate M. Sauzet. M. Sauzet, it is true, has always fought against us, while M. de Lamartine has incurred unpopularity and has compromised himself in our behalf. But what matters it ? M. Sauzet may be useful to us. M. de Lamartine can render us no further service. Let us nominate M. Sauzet to the presidency, and let us hope that M. de Lamartine will forgive us.’ Reasoning so specious obtained universal assent. Individuals are selfish, but parties are more selfish still. It would seem that men combining in parties or in crowds associate nothing but their vices, never their virtues.

“ I was satisfied with what I had done, for I did not wish to be linked by any ties of gratitude to a party which my duty would soon compel me to oppose. I returned to my state of isolation.

“ The king twice sent for me in order to gain me over

to his opinions in the presence of circumstances which for him were grave and critical. The king was a king able, eloquent, persuasive, and of winning familiarity in his address. Nothing but an imperative conviction could steel the soul against his graces, his powers, his blandishments, and the pertinacity of his language. I was touched by his confidence and his kindness. I resisted, bending like a reed beneath the influence of court favour. I was respectful, but immovable. ‘What impression have I produced in you?’ said the king, when the time arrived for me to take my departure. ‘Sire,’ said I, ‘you have astonished me, but have not altered my opinions.’

“ M. Guizot offered me the embassy at Vienna or London. He added, that, if that did not appear to me sufficient, the king would associate with these functions, already very highly recompensed, advantages of rank and fortune which would increase their value. He pressed me to accept the offer during several months. I was not insensible to these advances on the part of a statesman whose character and talents I honoured, although his principles and doctrines had been repugnant to me from childhood. I did not, however, wish for chains, though they were chains of gold. I remained poor, continuing to labour on, though for unknown ends. I was first a moderate, and then an energetic opponent of M. Guizot. The distance between us increased in proportion as the Government mounted up towards the past, and my mind, with that of the age, was going down towards the future.”

I have been unwilling to break the thread of this

autobiographical sketch and narrative by introducing any details or observations of my own. I must now for a few moments retrace my steps, in order briefly to direct attention to certain incidents and publications belonging to the period over which the auto-biographical sketch extends.

The poem entitled ‘The Fall of an Angel,’ a further part of the gigantic project of which ‘Jocelyn’ was a fragment, was published in 1838; and was followed by the ‘Poetic Gleanings,’ which were published in 1839. In the letter, dated December 1, 1838, which serves as a preface to the latter, the poet declares himself impelled by a sense of duty to take a part in the political and social progress of his age. “Love, prayer, and song, in these my life hath pass’d,” was his language in 1820; but in 1838, in the preface above alluded to, he states his conviction that “social labour is the daily and obligatory toil of every man who shares the perils and benefits of society.” In some of the passages which follow he alludes to questions of social development, and asserts their superior importance when placed in comparison with those of which the nature is exclusively political.

The ‘Poetic Gleanings’ contain an interesting poem which the author has entitled ‘Utopia.’ It was written in reply to a young French poet, Bouchard, who had addressed to Lamartine a poem on ‘The Political

Future of the World,' every strophe of which ended as follows :—

“ Child of the Ocean, dost thou see nothing yonder ? ”

In this poem the following passages occur :—

“ The possible is a word which increases by degrees. Time, which flies on towards a future generation, has already accomplished that which I see. A single worship is governing the world, vivified by a single love.

* * * *

“ War—this great suicide, this godless murder with its thousand arms—does not enrich with homicide these furrows, rendered fertile by dead bodies. Their thirst of death is slaked. Man has learned to consider human blood as sacred. It is the purple sap of life ; and he knows that God reckons all its drops !

* * * *

“ Selfishness, narrow thought, which hates everything to adore but one, curses its senseless error, and seeks enjoyment in the general happiness (of mankind).

* * * *

“ God, without any aid from us, will know how to accomplish his designs. Doth he ever sleep over a work which he has begun ? Vain man ! when he is waiting, why art thou so eager ?

* * * *

“ Resignation is the force of the just man : patience is his virtue.

* * * *

“ If mankind are sinking beneath the pressure of

their burden, let us apply our bruised shoulder to the rock which weighs them down : let us serve humanity, our age, our country. To live in everything is to live a hundred times ! It is to live in God ; it is to live with the immense life, which, through the progress of being and time, His virtue multiplies, and which is (as it were) the distant radiance of His divinity.

* * * *

“ In order to think, one must stand aloof from the crowd ; but for action, one must mingle with it.”

In 1841 the German poet Becker published, and dedicated to Lamartine, a collection of poems, containing, amongst others, the national song entitled ‘The German Rhine,’ which had produced in the preceding winter a great sensation in the Rhine provinces, and had been termed the *Marseillaise* of Germany.

The following is a free version of this song, with the omission of two or three unimportant lines :—

“ THE GERMAN RHINE.

They shall not have it ever, the Rhine of Germany,
Although like ravens o'er it they hover hungrily,
While pure and crystal waters its banks of verdure lave,
Or one bold oar remaineth to strike its echoing wave.

They shall not have it ever, the fair, free, German Rhine,
While lips with manhood glowing shall quaff its crimson wine,
While rocks shall stand unshaken beside its eddying stream,
While in its waves reflected its tall cathedrals gleam.

Till bards no more are breathing their strains to freedom true,
Till striplings bold no longer its gentle maidens woo,
Till Hope's last champion lieth within its watery shrine,
They shall not have it ever—the fair, free, German Rhine ! ”

To this Lamartine replied with his poem entitled ‘The Marseillaise of Peace.’ It is too long for quotation here, but the following passages may give a specimen of its spirit :—

“ Within thy banks, fair Rhine, roll proud and free !
 Nile of the West, whose waters empires drink !
 And let the ambitions and the rivalry
 Of bordering nations in thy swift wave sink !

* * * * *

Let hate and discord from the world be driven !
 Shall barriers rise our sympathies between ?
 Do boundaries divide the expanse of Heav’n ?
 Are frontier lines upon its blue vault seen ?
 Nations ! barbaric Pride’s more specious name !
 Doth Love all transit of your confines shun ?
 These banners tear ! they wave but to your shame—
 Let selfishness and hate a country claim !
 Fraternity has none.

Lines, oceans, rivers, now no more restrain
 The human heart’s extended sympathy ;
 Congenial thoughts all narrow bounds disdain,
 The enlighten’d world aspires to Unity.
 I live wherever France with ruling mind
 And kindling genius fires the soul of youth !
 Our climes are by our intellects design’d,
 A comrade in each thinking soul I find,
 I’ve but one country—Truth ! ”

This poem was too pacific in its tone for some of the more excitable of Lamartine’s countrymen ; and one of them, M. Edgar Quinet, addressed to him in the same year a poem extremely warlike in its spirit.

“THE RHINE.

“To M. DE LAMARTINE.

* * * *

“How great will be their triumph at the meekness of thy elegy! How the echo of Leipsic will laugh to scorn our fear! Already thy golden strain transformed by orgies comes back like a ball to pierce my heart.

* * * *

“When this people shall feel thirst, where shall we quench it? You think of conducting us to the country of the palm-trees! Our God does not wish that we should be led away to exile.

“While you were singing, and almost leading us astray, I saw his sword gleam with anger at his side, and France was sharpening its edge.”

* * * *

“Cause us,” the poet adds subsequently, “to enter with joy upon our ancient heritage: let us go to revisit our Jordan” (*Allons revoir notre Jourdain*).

On this subject, also, the French poet M. Alfred de Musset addressed to M. Becker a poem which he is said to have improvised before a literary circle. Each stanza begins,—

“Nous l'avons eu, votre Rhin Allemand.”
(We've had it once, your German Rhine.)

The following is a translation of a portion of the poem :—

“We've had it once, your German Rhine. What

was your German virtue doing when our all-powerful Cæsar was covering your plains with his shadow? Where did then the last bone [you speak of] fall?"

The words of M. Becker's song were—

"Bis seine Fluth begraben des letzten Mann's gebein."
(Until its waves have buried the bone of its last defender.)

"We've had it once, your German Rhine. If you have forgotten the history of your country, your daughters will, doubtless, have preserved a better recollection of us, as they poured out for us your delicate white wine.

* * * *

"How many ravens did you muster against the expiring eagle on the day of carnage?

"Let it flow in peace, your German Rhine, and let your Gothic cathedrals be reflected, modestly, in its wave. But take care lest your Bacchanalian melodies should awaken the dead from their ensanguined rest."

On the question of the election of a president for the Chamber in 1842, alluded to by Lamartine in the sketch which I have placed before you, the Conservative party were divided. Those who constituted what was termed the "Centre pur" put forward M. Sauzet; while Lamartine was put in nomination by those who were termed Conservative Reformers. The ministry, which, it is said, was desirous of securing the support of MM. Passy and Dufaure, the political friends of M. Sauzet, used its influence in favour of the latter,

who was elected. The numbers were—for Sauzet, 193 ; for Lamartine, 64 ; for Odillon Barrot, 45.

Lamartine did not, however, quit the ranks of the Conservatives, though his confidence in them appears to have been shaken when he saw the aversion and distrust with which his views of progress were regarded. On the proposition made by M. Gauneron shortly afterwards, with reference to the presence of placemen in the Chamber (*sur les incompatibilités*), Lamartine spoke with great eloquence and power. He frankly acknowledged the evil which was complained of, but thought it one which legislation could not altogether obviate. He thought that the remedy must rest with public opinion, and held that the electors could most fitly themselves decide whether or not a placeman in the Chamber faithfully discharged his duties as a representative. After paying a high compliment to the memory of Royer Collard, whose disappearance, he said, had abandoned society to the disordered movement of individualism and eternal change, he proceeded to make the following remarks on the general political state of France :—

“ You have nothing whatever to counterbalance those violent shifting of opinion which in a country of enthusiasm and impulse so often involve both men and institutions in one common ruin ; and yet you regard it as a great misfortune that the protection of a few general

interests of localities should furnish you with somewhat of the counterpoise you want, and place a little ballast (forgive me the expression) in a ship which carries too much sail, which rocks with every gust, and is upset so frequently ! ”

In the discussion which subsequently arose in the Chamber on electoral reform, Lamartine, in one of his most remarkable speeches, announced his devotion to the cause of conservative and rational, but at the same time unceasing, progress. He alluded, in language most forcible and eloquent, to those well-intentioned but short-sighted politicians, who refused to examine any measure of change, though good in itself, and introduced after long and mature deliberation.

“ Such men,” he said, “ see only one evil for themselves, one danger for the institutions of the country, and that is progress. It is to no purpose that you have fought in concert with them, and aided them in crushing faction. You may, perhaps, have won from them esteem ; but the moment you propose to them a measure of innovation, most prudent, most wise, and, as you think, advantageous to the conservative spirit of the government,—from that very moment you are looked upon as an enemy.”

The following passage in this speech contains an expression well known and frequently alluded to in France:—“ They would have you believe that the

genius of politicians consists but in seizing a position which chance or revolution has assigned to them, and standing there immovable, inert, implacable—yes, implacable opponents to all projected amelioration. And yet, if the genius of a statesman charged with the direction of a government consisted in that, and in that alone, there would then be no need of any statesman —a common signpost would suffice.” It is stated in the report from which these passages are translated that long and general excitement followed the delivery of these words.

In 1843, in the discussion on the address, Lamartine declared that his connexion with the Conservative party was at an end. He said that it would thenceforward be his aim to organize an active opposition ; and that it was the wish, both of himself and of those with whom he should in future act, to become the Whigs of the Revolution of July—the Whigs of modern democracy, and of the progress of human liberty and intelligence throughout the world.

This secession, which the Conservative party had soon ample reason to regret, was a step which could hardly have been matter of surprise to those who were acquainted with the sentiments he had expressed in his speech on electoral reform. Its occurrence, however, so soon after his defeat as a candidate for the Pre-

sidency of the Chamber, gave his enemies a pretext for proclaiming it the result of mortified ambition.

In the discussion which took place in the same year with reference to the reduction of the tax on salt, Lamartine appeared at the tribune, and was received with unequivocal marks of interest and attention. He admitted the advantage of taxes to which the people were accustomed, as well as the exceeding difficulty of substituting one tax for another. He said that the position that those were the best taxes which fell upon the largest masses was true only upon this supposition—that the taxes themselves were just and equal in their pressure. Taxes were of two kinds, moral and immoral ; and nothing had been proved with reference to a tax, until it had been shown to be a just one. You might fill your treasury with millions, but, if the impost was one which pressed most heavily upon the suffering classes and their most vital wants, you would fill it at the same time with murmurs of discontent, with popular privations, with party recriminations, as well as with that social disaffection of which it was the duty of prudent legislation to disencumber the basis of institutions, the basis of its financial system, the basis of the state itself. He said that salt was consumed in the greatest quantities by the poor, and as it was, physiologically speaking, a constituent element of the

human body, the tax upon it pressed not only upon misery, but on life and human organization, and was in effect a tax upon the blood and nerves of man. He passed a glowing eulogium on the principles which had governed the legislation of England on the subject ; and it is interesting to follow the terms in which one who took so prominent a part in the revolution of which his country was a few years since the theatre, could instance the attention which had been shown in England to the wants of the suffering masses of the people.

One part of this speech was very fanciful and curious. “Salt,” said the orator, “is in France not merely a taxable commodity ; salt is an idea—an idea of justice, of liberty and equality.” Movements of surprise and interruption followed the delivery of these words ; but the speaker continued :—“ Yes, gentlemen, salt is an idea ; and the proof of it is this, that it has figured in the programme of all parties who since the origin of the representative system have disputed at this tribune the possession of power, and of that by which power is or ought to be conferred, true and honourable and serious popularity.”

In conclusion, he alluded with tact and eloquence to the difficulties of the position of the minister of finance, as contrasted with his feelings in reference to this subject. “ It was clear,” he said, “ to me, that, beneath

his official language, another language struggled for utterance in his soul ; that beneath the stern opinion of the minister there dwelt the kind feeling of the benevolent individual ready to throw openhanded to the country the boon which we so earnestly desire." He said it could hardly be expected that the minister should incur the responsibility of a possible deficit in the exchequer, which could not easily be filled up. That responsibility was one which he thought that the Chamber should take upon itself. They could not, he said, at the expiration of a session, carry with them to the presence of their constituents any burthen so light, so glorious, and so grateful as the responsibility of a benefit conferred.

The delivery of these words was followed by unanimous and reiterated marks of approbation from all parts of the Chamber.

In an article in the 'Quarterly Review' for March, 1848, the attention of the public is called to a curious prophecy contained in a small work which is stated by the reviewer to have been published by Lamartine anonymously in 1843, and with his name affixed in December 1847. The work thus erroneously attributed to Lamartine is styled 'Le Hachych,' and is the production of Monsieur Lallemand, the author of a work on political education. The mistake of the reviewer is said to have originated in the circumstance

that the work, which had been attributed to Lamartine, was sent over from France, and sold with a false title-page printed and added to it in this country, which gave the name of Lamartine as its author. The prophecy and the article in the Review are deserving of perusal and attention. It is, however, but common justice to Lamartine to observe that the facts last mentioned completely negative the reviewer's inference, so far as it was drawn from the assumed authorship of the work in question, of Lamartine's "early connexion with the Republican conspiracy."

Previously to the publication of his 'History of the Girondins,' which appeared in 1847, Lamartine, with the exception of certain articles which he had contributed to the 'Bien Public' of Mâcon, had not written much in prose. It had, however, been remarked by Sainte Beuve, that his address on being received a member of the Academy; his pamphlet entitled 'The Politics of Reason,' published previously to his departure for the East; an Essay on the Civil Duties of Curate, published in 1831; and an Address to the Academy of Mâcon, were sufficient to prove that he was perfectly at home in that department of composition.

The 'History of the Girondins' is a work of such importance, and embraces subject-matter of such variety and extent, that a notice proportioned to its interest

would exceed the limits of a lecture. I must ask you to bear in mind that the publication of this history, and the delivery and publication of the remarkable speech and letters to which I shall presently invite your attention, preceded by a few months only the French Revolution which broke out in February, 1848. How far that Revolution was the work of Lamartine, who figured for a time as its presiding genius, I must leave it to my audience to determine. A writer in the ‘ Edinburgh Review’ for January, 1848, observes that “ the heart of Lamartine is with the Revolution* throughout all its phases;” that, “ while he marks and condemns its crimes and excesses with strict justice, his master-feelings are, a deep conviction of its paramount necessity and rectitude, and a patriotic pride in its triumph over domestic as well as foreign foes;” that, “ far from branding the Revolution with a general character of irreligion, on account of the excesses of the mob, or of some few crazy fanatics of infidelity, he is rather disposed to regard the whole movement as one of a religious nature, having its origin in a deep, dim, but sincere determination to realize the spirit of Christianity in the arrangements of society and the institutions of government.”

The history opens with an interesting sketch of the life and character of Mirabeau. “ But for him,” says

* That is the first French Revolution.

the historian, “ the Revolution would, perhaps, have remained in the state of an undeveloped idea and tendency. He was not its original author, but became its living manifestation ; and his words, which found an echo everywhere, became its proverbs.”

Louis XVI., with his beautiful and cruelly calumniated queen, are afterwards brought before the reader, and their lives and characters are touched upon with exquisite feeling, taste, and felicity of expression. One passage relating to the former is particularly worthy of remark. “ When one places oneself,” says the historian, “ in the position of Louis XVI., and asks oneself what counsels could have saved him, one is reduced in the end to this sorrowful answer—None !”

“ His death,” says the historian, in a subsequent part of his work, “ alienated from the French cause that immense portion of every people which judge events only through the heart. Human nature,” he adds, “ is merciful. The Republic forgot that it gave to royalty the character of martyrdom—to liberty that of vengeance. It thus prepared a reaction against the republican cause, and arrayed on the side of royalty the sensibility, the interest, the tears, of a portion of every people. It is republicans who should most deplore this blood, for it is their cause that it has stained, and it is that blood which has cost them the republic.”

In his sketch of Marie Antoinette, Lamartine gives

her character as a woman and as a queen ; and, speaking of her in her latter capacity, he observes, “ Her apartments were a focus in which a conspiracy was constantly going on against the government. The nation discovered this at last, and she became the object of its hatred. The people looked upon her name as the phantom of the counter-revolution. That which men fear they are ready to calumniate. She was represented as another Messalina. The most infamous pamphlets were circulated, the most scandalous anecdotes believed. There may have been ground to accuse her of tender weaknesses ; there is nothing to prove that she was depraved. Young and beautiful, and surrounded by those of whom she was the idol, if her heart did not remain insensible, her feelings, veiled in mystery, but, perhaps, at the same time innocent, never, at all events, broke out into open scandal. History has limits which delicacy assigns—those limits we will never violate.”

The comparatively favourable estimate of Robespierre, who is termed by Lamartine “ the Luther of Politics,” has caused very general astonishment. Most men have from childhood been accustomed to regard that personage as a type of the most revolting blood-thirstiness, of hateful tyranny, and despicable cowardice. In the work of Lamartine, however, he is made the centre of attraction. “ On him,” says the

reviewer before-mentioned, “the reader’s attention is gradually concentrated more and more, as on the living emblem of the revolution, of its principle, of its energy, of its moral grandeur, and of the excesses by which that grandeur was chequered; and with his fall the narrative ends, as with the cessation of all that could give an interest in its story.” “It is impossible,” he continues, “to rise from a perusal of Lamartine’s book without a somewhat changed opinion of Robespierre. There is no vindication of his acts. No attempt is made to mitigate our horror at the crimes of which he is reputed guilty—none to justify massacre on the plea of public necessity or of righteous zeal. Lamartine’s aim is to analyze the motives that actuated Robespierre, as well as to determine what was really his share in the atrocities which were perpetrated in his name. Perhaps he does this with some partiality. He has conceived an ideal framework of Robespierre’s character, and fills it up by attributing to him particular acts or intentions of clemency, for which he has often little and sometimes no warranty. Still on the whole his explanation of this strange character is satisfactory. Historic truth and a knowledge of human nature gain by reducing the distorted and exaggerated traits of the monster into the features of a man actuated by the ordinary passions of humanity, gifted with many noble and even amiable qualities, and plunged into eternal infamy

by common human weaknesses, tried in fearful times by most extraordinary emergencies."

Lamartine considers the close of the Reign of Terror to have been not consequent upon, but coincident with, the death of Robespierre. "His death," he says, "was the date, and not the cause, of the cessation of the [reign of] terror. Punishments would have been put a stop to by his triumph, as they were put a stop to by his doom. Divine justice in this way brought dishonour on his repentance, and misfortune on his good intentions. It made of his tomb a sealed abyss, and of his memory an enigma of which history shudders to offer the key-word—fearing to act unjustly if she should say 'crime,' and to excite abhorrence if she should write 'virtue.'"

In speaking of the massacres of September, he observes that "Nations may march through blood unsullied, if they march towards the conquest of their rights, towards justice and the liberty of the world. But it must be through blood which is shed on the field of battle, not that which is spilled in the cold and systematic massacre of the conquered. A revolution which remained inflexibly pure would win over the world to its ideas. St. Bartholomew did more harm to Catholicism than would have been done by the blood of a million Catholics. The days of September were the St. Bartholomew of Liberty. Machiavelli would have ad-

vised them, and Fénélon would have branded them with eternal infamy. There is better policy in one virtue of Fénélon than in all the maxims of Machiavelli. The greatest statesmen of revolutions sometimes become their martyrs, but they never consent to become their executioners."

An interesting character is given in this work of the Duke de Chartres, afterwards king of the French. The historian speaks of him as having had no youth, "since youth, in the case of the pupils of Madame de Genlis, had been suppressed by education." A curious anecdote is told of what took place in an interview between the Duke and Danton. The former, in speaking of the September massacres, declared "that the army regarded with abhorrence blood shed elsewhere than on the field of battle, and that the assassinations of September appeared to him to bring dishonour upon Liberty." "You are too young to judge of these events," replied Danton; "to understand them you must have been in our position. The country was menaced, and there was no one to defend it; the enemy was advancing, and was about to overwhelm us: we were obliged to throw a river of blood between the tyrants and ourselves. Keep silence for the future. Return to the army, fight bravely, but be not idly prodigal of life; you have many years before you. France has no affection for the republic—she has the habits,

the weaknesses, and the wants of a monarchy ; when our storms have ceased she will be carried back to monarchy, either by her faults or her necessities ; you will be king. Farewell, young man ! Remember Danton's prophecy ! ”

In the ‘History of the Girondins’ there is one defect which is certainly much to be regretted. Statements on matters of history, at variance with received opinions, are left wholly unsupported by those references and proofs (what the French call *pièces justificatives*) which their novelty and boldness peculiarly require. They may be—they probably are—true : History, however, demands not truth alone, but truth so fenced round by proofs and facts drawn from pure sources as to obviate even the possibility of suspicion.

But whatever may be wanting in an historical point of view to the completeness of the work in question, it created in France, and indeed throughout the whole of Europe, a sensation of no ordinary kind. The brilliancy of its style and the energy of its descriptions are eminently calculated to fascinate the understanding, and call into action all the sympathies of the heart. As a powerful resuscitation of the era which it comprises, it is certainly without a rival. Many surviving witnesses of that momentous epoch have said that, while they dwelt with breathless interest on its pages, their blood, chilled by years, resumed its early glow, and

that they were themselves carried back as in a dream to the animated scenes and startling incidents of their youth. The revolution was brought home to their feelings and recollections, not as a shade or dying echo of the past, but as a great, a living, and a terrible reality.

At Mâcon, the birthplace of the historian, he was invited to a sumptuous entertainment, which was given to celebrate the publication of his work. The banquet took place on the 18th of July, 1847, and forms one of the great epochs in his life. The characters of author and politician are in him so intimately blended, that the banquet, which was offered as a tribute to his genius, assumed at the same time the aspect and importance of a great political demonstration. Deputations attended from the communes of Lyons, Châlons, Bourg, Autun, Cluny, and Mâcon. The number of subscribers amounted to about 2000, and more than twice that number were assembled as lookers-on. At four o'clock, as the banquet was on the point of commencing, a violent thunderstorm occurred, and threatened destruction to the edifice in which the entertainment had been prepared. A large majority, however, of the assembled guests remained, and, notwithstanding the interruptions of the storm, chanted in an impressive manner the concluding part of the *Marseillaise*.

When the storm had subsided, M. Rolland, mayor of Mâcon and president of the banquet, addressed a

congratulatory speech to Lamartine as the historian of the Girondins. He told him of the pride with which Mâcon had regarded the triumphs of his genius—a pride in which France, as represented there by numerous deputations, seemed cordially to participate. He paid a high compliment to the eloquence of their guest, and offered, in the name of every one then present, a tribute to his austere political integrity, which, he said, gave them strength by the vigour of its example. He thanked him in the name of France “for having disentangled from faults belonging to the time, from the errors of individuals, and the crimes of faction, those principles of the French Revolution which were, in themselves, pure, and holy, and immortal. France, thanks to you,” he said, “will never again forget the value of Liberty, of Equality, of Peace, of the progress of the human race in the paths of social amelioration ; she will never again forget how anarchy impedes and cruelty annihilates that progress.” “It is public opinion which you have clothed with armour, and public opinion will bear in mind that gift.” “If sometimes it grieves us to see that you are left in a courageous minority in the councils of your country, we tell you that, at all events, throughout the whole of France, there is, in public opinion, a majority in your favour.” He gave as a toast, “The Historian of the Girondins.”

The passages selected from the speech of M. Rolland have been quoted as showing the opinions entertained by a large and important body of Lamartine's countrymen on the political import and bearing of his history.

It is impossible within the limits of the present lecture to do justice to the speech delivered by Lamartine in reply. In the report which is given of it in the '*Presse*' it occupies nearly seven closely-printed columns. What follows may serve as a specimen of its general purport.

He said that by remaining in their places, undisturbed by the thunder, the lightning, and the storm, they had proved themselves to be in truth the children of those Gauls who exclaimed, on an occasion more serious than the present, "that, if the vault of heaven should tumble down, they would support it on the iron of their lances." His book, he said, stood in need of a conclusion, and had now received one at their hands. The conclusion was, that France had at once felt the necessity of examining more minutely the spirit of her Revolution,—of imbuing herself more with its principles, when those principles had been purified and disengaged from the excesses and blood which had polluted them,—and, finally, of drawing from her past experience such lessons as might serve both her present and future need.

He said that, from the dawn of his political intelligence, he had frequently asked himself this question :

“ What does the French Revolution mean ? Was it, as the worshippers of the past declare, a mere popular sedition on an extensive scale ? Popular seditions, however, leave behind them nothing but ruins and dead bodies. The French Revolution, it is true, left these, but it also left behind it something in addition—a doctrine and a spirit which will last as long as human reason shall endure !”

“ Was it,” I asked myself again, “ the mere result of embarrassment in the finances ? What ! is it possible that this could be the remedy devised by a country with such resources as France possessed, in order to obviate, at such a cost of life and treasure, a miserable deficit of 50 or 60 millions ? No ; let us abandon these puerile suggestions to those who, in their passion for financial calculations, have thought that an old world’s fall and a new world’s rise were matters which mere figures could determine ! The Revolution,” he said, “ was the advent of a new idea, or of a group of new ideas, into the world. Their first catechists were Fénélon, in his ‘ Telemachus ; ’ Montesquieu, in his ‘ Spirit of Laws ; ’ and Rousseau, in his ‘ Social Contract.’ From them sprang that longing for total renovation which soon so extensively influenced the human heart.”

He said that time would not allow him to go through, as he had wished, the different phases of the Revolu-

tion. He glanced at the period in which it had become the prey of an ambitious soldier, whose services to France he was willing to admit, and in whom, he said, he recognised the sublime but erring genius of the counter-revolution.

"The Restoration had deviated less than its predecessor from the liberal ideas of '89 ; but," he added, "it is more easy (in politics) to vanquish one's enemies than to triumph over one's friends. You have a proof of it yourselves at the present time ! The Restoration, hurried on by the exaggerations of its friends, fell into the abyss of its own past."

In alluding to the actual state of France, he said that they were indebted to the government for having preserved peace ; their conduct in which respect might one day entitle them to claim an amnesty for their other errors. War was but murder on an extensive scale ; and murder, on whatever scale committed, could not deserve the name of progress.

He afterwards attacked the whole elective system as resting upon mere materialism. The object of reason, and also of the Revolution, was to make that system more spiritual in its nature. They counted souls, and not centimes.

Lamartine then alluded to the laws of September—the fortifications of Paris—the laws which had been passed with reference to the regency—and observed on

the entire dependence of one of the Chambers on the Crown. Having stigmatised the official and other corruption, which then so extensively prevailed, he declared that a monarchy surrounded by such attributes might one day deceive even itself, and come in the end to mistake its own will for the will of the nation constitutionally expressed. These words, I must remind you, were uttered, as it were, upon the eve of the Revolution of 1848. He said, that in minds the most tranquil there now existed dark misgivings ; that for some time past low whispers had been exchanged ; that one citizen approached another with disquietude ; that every one had a cloud upon his brow. “ Let statesmen,” he added, “ be on their guard : from these clouds there sometimes issue lightnings and sometimes storms.” “ What solution,” he exclaimed, “ will be found for this enigma? Will it be a new revolution, not indeed of reason, but of madness, — the fierce overflowing of an irritated democracy upturning the foundations on which society reposes—Family—Property—the State? Or will it be a kind of gradual decay—a sort of Capua of the Revolution ? ” “ You ask me,” he subsequently observed, “ what is that moral force by which the government will be compelled to obey the nation’s will? I will tell you ; it is the sovereignty of ideas! the republic of intelligence! It is, in a word—opinion ! Gentlemen,

opinion had its birth upon the day on which Guttenberg, whom I have elsewhere termed the mechanist of a new world, invented, by means of printing, a plan for the multiplication and interchange, without assignable limits, of human thought and reason !”

In conclusion he proposed to them a toast—“ The regular, progressive, and at the same time unceasing, triumph of human reason !—the triumph of human reason in ideas, in institutions, in laws, and in the rights of all—in the independence of modes of worship, in education, in literature, in the essence, as well as in the forms, of government.”

It is needless to add that this speech was received with the utmost enthusiasm by those to whom it was addressed.

On the 24th of August in the same year Lamartine was present at a public meeting of the Free Trade Association at Marseilles. He rose, when several speakers had already addressed the meeting, and said, after a few introductory observations, that he appeared as a witness to render testimony, and not as an orator to convince or teach. “ I shall,” he continued, “ content myself with stating what are the chief considerations which influenced at an early period my mind and heart in favour of your theories. Yes, my heart also—my heart more particularly ; for before examination had made liberty of labour and exchange a conviction

of my reason, Nature had made it a sentiment of my heart.” He then alluded to that language of Providence, so much at variance with the language which man had chosen to employ—that language which ordains to us life at a cheap rate. “ Yes,” said he, “ that is the language of Providence and of Nature ; man only has been able to arrest it on their lips in order to substitute a language of his own—the language of nakedness and hunger. Man’s language is, ‘ Let us make life dear ! ’ Let us make life dear—and how ? By prescribing to nations abstinences and compulsory fasts, side by side with the wealth, either natural or manufactured, with which they abound to overflowing. Let us place, it has been said, upon the frontiers of nations, armies which are paid by the money of the people, and are solely employed in intercepting and rendering scarce aliments, metals, utensils, fruits, and even the raw materials of labour, in order that all may suffer from the unemployed wealth of each, and groan, not under misery, but under general prosperity ! ”

“ I speak here of customs, gentlemen ; but let it be understood, I speak of customs when used as an instrument of arbitrary prohibitions and privileges for certain industries, imposing a tax upon some to favour others ; and by no means of customs when regarded as an impost, natural, moderate, and useful to the state in its collective character.

"Yes; I affirm that the system of prohibition, or protection, is such a falsehood in the eyes of God and man, that it has made the fertility of nature, the diversity of products, the liberality of Providence, a scourge in the opinions of the economists."

After referring to that "enormous, confused, irrational volume," which was called the Tariff of French Customs, he said: "I asked myself, as I turned over the leaves of this code of our voluntary misfortunes, 'Is it possible that this can be the law of God? Is it possible that this can be the gospel of true protection and charity for the masses of the people?' No! it is the code of selfishness! It is the book of gold and of monopoly! It is the gospel of social falsehood, and of the blind cupidity of the insatiable producer against the indigent consumer."

He then proceeded, in a fair and candid manner, to state the necessity of treating with respect those interests which had grown up under the protection of existing laws. He said that they ought to call upon the government, not to overthrow a system in a day, but gradually to bring the rights and interests of the producer, as well as of the consumer, to that state of perfect justice and freedom, "towards which," he continued, "we ought to march with a step as slow as is consistent with human weakness, and with that backwardness by which great national movements are characterised; but

towards which we must march from this day forth, march constantly, march with resolution and with firmness—not as men intoxicated with a novel theory, and bent on applying it at random, but as statesmen who weigh all interests in their hands, in order to give to each its due, and who will neither consent to sacrifice, on the one hand, truth to time, nor, on the other, time to truth.”

It may be interesting here, although not strictly in accordance with the principle of chronological arrangement, to quote one or two passages from a speech which had been delivered by Lamartine in an adjourned debate, resumed in the Chamber of Deputies, in the sitting of the 23rd of February, 1846, on the proposition of M. Desmousseaux de Givré with reference to the duties to be levied on the introduction of cattle into towns. Lamartine, in the course of his reply to M. Berryer, alluded to the free-trade measures of Sir Robert Peel, who had, he said, brought about “the Revolution of cheapness” (*la Révolution du bon marché*). “Yes,” he added, “the Revolution of food; the Revolution of cheapness for his country; the most useful, the most productive of revolutions, and one which does not cause human tears or blood to flow.”

He confirmed the declaration which Sir Robert Peel had made, that in England and other countries the increase in the production of cattle had not kept pace

with the increase of population. He stigmatised the selfish axiom, so frequently repeated at the tribune, of “*Chacun pour soi, chacun chez soi*” (Let every man remain at home and take care of himself).

“ We are told,” he observed in conclusion, “ that political economy is a science of figures, and must be kept apart from feeling. No!” he said ; “ political economy has a soul, and must feel for the masses of the people, of whose well-being or misery it is itself the instrument. I tell you that political economy has a soul, and must, as I have elsewhere observed, have its morality. The diminution of the price of provisions for the people constitutes the virtue of this science ; the systematic augmentation of prices is its crime.”

In October, 1847, Lamartine published in the ‘*Bien Public*’ of Mâcon a letter containing a programme of his views upon matters of domestic policy, as well as of the reforms which he demanded. Of these the following is a summary :—

“ Sovereignty exercised by the people ;
Electoral rights extended to all citizens ;
Primary assemblies nominating electors for a temporary function ;
Electors nominating representatives for a limited period ;
Representatives not abandoned to the corruptions of ministers, but paid by the people, in order to remove every pretext for servility.

Functionaries at their posts, and not in the Chambers, where they play two parts quite incompatible—that of persons controlling and persons controlled ;

A National Assembly ;

Ministers named by ballot by the majority ;

The dynasty without any other privilege than the throne ;

The king inviolable ;

The princes simple citizens ;

A real liberty of worship, by the separation of church from state ;

Absolute liberty of instruction, with the exception of that surveillance of morals which the state ought never to give up ;

Liberty of the press, by the revocation of the laws of September ;

Security of the seat of the National Assembly guaranteed by a prudential law against any abuse of the fortifications of Paris ;

A permanent army, and an army of reserve, which would comprise the whole available military force of the country ;

A fair and just law which should equally distribute the charges of recruiting ;

Peace,—but France in her proper rank in peace as she was in war ;

France the natural and avowed ally of liberty of ideas and of the liberty of nations throughout the universe ;

Abolition of slavery wherever the French flag floats ;

The organization of gratuitous instruction for the people on the largest basis ;

Social brotherhood in principles and institutions ;

Progressive free-trade ;

Living rendered cheap by the reduction of those taxes which press heavily on articles of food ;

A poor-rate, notwithstanding the calumnies by which the selfishness of political economists seeks to bring discredit on such an impost ;

Foundlings to be adopted by the state, and not flung back to death by an investigation into the circumstances of their birth, and by the closing of the turning-baskets ;

The extinction of mendicity, asylums for the infirm, and public workshops for those in health ;

Social charity promulgated in numerous laws, to aid all the wants, all the sufferings, and all the miseries that fall to the lot of the people ;

A fixed sum given away each year as the liberality of the state ;

A new office of minister of public benevolence ;

A minister to superintend the people's mode of living (de la vie du peuple) ;

Let the Government enter on this course of action, and we will follow it without asking whether it wears a crown, a tiara, or a hat."

In this remarkable letter, which forms a striking combination of much that is sound in sense, and good in feeling, with some projects that are purely visionary, Lamartine did not declare himself entirely opposed to monarchy, but announced his conviction "that demo-

cratic government would be the eternal government of that future towards which we were approaching.” He stated it as his opinion that the sovereignty of the people might, without forfeiting its character, retain an hereditary magistracy at the top of its elective pyramid ; and summed up in the following words his views on this part of his subject :—“The People king ; Opinion holding rule ; with royalty as its executive.” (*Peuple roi ; opinion regnante ; royauté exécutive.*)

This letter was followed a few days afterwards by two letters on the situation of France in 1847 with reference to foreign powers. In the first Lamartine commented severely on the policy of the government with regard to the Eastern question. That policy, he said, brought isolation and consequent humiliation on France, and caused the blood of a people devoted to her interest to cry through all the Lebanon against her. He then criticised their policy in the matter of the Spanish marriages. He said they had evaded a treaty for the purpose of planning an intrigue, and had torn in pieces the Quadruple Alliance to replace it by the contract of the Montpensier marriage. They had notified this marriage to France as a great political achievement, and France had for a moment been deceived. “Alas!” he added, “what does she think of it at present, and, above all things, what will she think of it ten years hence ? The Spanish marriages,”

he continued, “were a suit without an end, which the dynastic temerity of the ministers had not hesitated to inflict on Europe, which raised eternal discord between France and England ; a suit which could only be decided by a war of succession, carried on by a nation for the benefit of a family ; a suit for which, in either case, France must pay most dearly, whether it were lost, or whether it were won.”

The next letter of Lamartine was devoted entirely to the consideration of the Italian question. He eulogized the occupant of the papal chair, whom he termed the crowned Rienzi of modern Rome ; but stated that, after studying Italy for twenty years, he considered the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, in the centre of that peninsula, an organic and almost insurmountable obstacle to the active, firm, and independent union of its states under a single rule. He thought that the only way to equal the historical greatness of the Romans would be to succour and to save them now. “Happy,” he exclaims, “this Washington of future Italy ! It seems,” he adds, “a sad and cruel thing to say, but this Washington, perhaps, must be a stranger !” He afterwards defined the papacy at Rome, in its character of a temporal power, to be “the union in a single government of the faults of all other kinds of government, without any of their redeeming advantages.” He thought that a federal league

was the nearest approach that could be made to national unity in Italy, and that such a confederation could only be effected under the protection of some armed mediator, sufficiently strong to moderate and control the jealousies of rival princes as well as of rival nationalities. He thought that France alone was in a position thus to mediate for Italy : but he had no hope that the government would take this course. “The Spanish marriages had alienated England ; they had rendered impossible any new bond of union with states that were free and constitutional, and had forced France to go about begging for alliances with the natural foes of the liberty of nations.”

A sketch of the life and writings of Lamartine during and subsequently to the month of February, 1848, would involve the necessity of entering more at length than I am prepared to do into the history and details of the last French Revolution. His speeches at the Hôtel de Ville, his circular to the foreign ministers then at Paris, as well as a variety of documents which, though signed by all the members of the Provisional Government, were evidently the productions of his pen, are matters of general notoriety, and may be found at length in the journals of the day.

There is, however, at the conclusion of the speech on foreign policy which he delivered in the National Assembly on the 23rd of May, 1848, a passage which

cannot be too often repeated or too highly eulogized :— “The Government,” said he, “has had but one idea—that of placing France at peace with all the world. We have desired it in the interest of the People, in whose name and by whom was accomplished the revolution of February last. The People can only live by wages, which are the child of labour; but recollect that labour ceases when commerce and industry are paralyzed. Together with peace we have desired the renewal of industry, of labour, and of wages; we have desired that the People should have the means of living. Formerly peace was regarded as an Utopia; it is now become an instinct, a necessity, the cause to which we have devoted the revolution.

“I conclude with these few words:—We were told in former days that victory was on the side of large battalions; one may now say that it will be on the side of right and justice.”

As a poet, Lamartine is distinguished by largeness of sympathy and benevolence of heart, combined with great elevation and tenderness of thought and feeling. He has faith, too, in the destinies and progress of mankind. His soul and verse seem comprehensive enough to embrace them all without distinction of class, or race, or creed. He is deeply impressed with the consolations of religion, and his generous love of freedom lends dignity to his efforts and life and vigour to his

song. He seldom travels too far from the beaten track, nor does he seek recondite images. He commences with an idea or a sentiment common to all, and then proceeds to spiritualize affection or to idealize the world of sense. He possesses a well-stored memory and a graceful fancy. Indeed, he may be called the poet of memory and of fancy rather than the poet of imagination and passion. He cannot certainly be said to possess any very large amount of original or creative genius; and for what is called dramatic force we look in vain to his poetry. His personages are not characters who feel and speak for themselves as they naturally would do, but they are themes on which Lamartine himself expatiates, grouping around them thoughts and feelings essentially his own. This tendency he indulges to such an extent as to render his verse at times monotonous and wearisome even to minds not over critical and indulgent to the egotism of song. Description is his forte; prolixity his foible. Whether he deals with human sentiment or natural scenery, the same fault is equally apparent. The sentiments in the one case, the landscapes in the other, are too often encumbered with an excess of detail, and repeated sometimes until they cease to charm. He seems to forget that it is only by introducing those varieties and that relief which the natural world and man present, that the interest of the reader can be

for any length of time sustained. Side by side, however, with his defects, he has merits of a high, if not the very highest order; while the loftiness of his purpose, the comprehensiveness of his sympathy, the elevation and independence of his thoughts and feelings, the purity of his enlarged benevolence, his glowing love of liberty, the earnestness of his zeal for progress and social amelioration, the tenderness and interest with which he invests the feelings and the incidents of domestic life, induce us to recur with pleasure to his poetry, and perpetuate his hold upon the human heart.

His character, not only as a poet, but also as an orator and a politician, has been sketched by Cormenin, who published some years since, under the assumed name of Timon, a work, entitled ‘Sketches of Parliamentary Orators.’ The writer renders justice to his merits as a poet, and pays a fitting compliment to his well-stored memory, his tact, and high political integrity. “Lamartine,” he observes, “possesses a vast memory, which is able to retain and give forth all with which he stores it. This memory does not hesitate before interruptions, but easily plays along its course, and follows, without losing itself, the thread of a thousand turnings. Amid the storms of the tribune he does not lose his calmness, though, indeed, round him they are never very violent; nor does he fail in tact and good taste in an extemporeaneous reply. Besides, there is not the least gall on

his lips, and he evinces a poetical ingenuousness and an honesty of heart which have something maidenlike about them."

This extract is taken from the ninth edition of this work. It has gone through I know not how many editions, in one of which the author, in speaking of his portrait of Lamartine, observes, "It has been the most difficult of all my portraits. I have touched and retouched twenty times ; I have taken it down and replaced it on the easel. . . . I have been on the point of throwing away my brushes. This portrait has been unceasingly the torment of my pallet." Undoubtedly Cormenin has not exaggerated the difficulties of presenting to the public that which might be called a satisfactory portrait of Lamartine. His political career has exhibited so many varying phases, that the biographer must hesitate to pronounce an opinion on it. His life, however, seems through all its changing scenes to have evinced great nobleness of heart, independence of judgment, and integrity of purpose.

At the outbreak of the Revolution of 1848 it cannot be denied that he rendered to his country the most exalted services of heroism and genius. He stood undismayed before the frenzy of the populace, and his eloquence alone stayed the fury of the storm. It was he who induced an excited people to acquiesce in the abolition of the punishment of death for all political

offences. He thus with a most humane and chivalrous generosity threw the broad shield of his then unrivalled influence over the lives of the ministers who had fallen. He had before made an equally noble effort on behalf of the ex-ministers of Charles the Tenth. His country was not backward, at all events for a time, in acknowledging and honouring his services, and the result of the first elections to the National Assembly was for him the most magnificent of civil triumphs. All eyes in France and Europe were fixed intently on him, and seemed to regard him as the saviour of his country and the benefactor of the human race. It was thought that by a line of energetic, and at the same time conciliatory policy, equally removed from dictatorship on the one hand and unworthy compromise on the other, he might prove himself the Washington of the young Republic. These bright anticipations, however, were not destined to be realized. He did not give proof of that mastery of detail, that definiteness and fixity of purpose, that practical sagacity and skill in combination, without which no man can make good his claim to the character of a leading statesman. He seemed also to lend, to some extent, the credit of his name to dangerous illusions on the part of the French people. At his side, too, and associated with him in the government, stood a leader who was looked upon as daring and unscrupulous. Lamartine was probably of opinion that this unnatural

alliance was the sole guarantee for the tranquillity of France—that one who might prove himself reckless in opposition might be rendered harmless as a colleague. If so, his error, though on a point of vital import, was an error of judgment rather than of principle. He is at all events entitled to be judged with reference to the circumstances with which he had to deal. The epoch was new, its exigencies fearful; and where, it may be asked, was a statesman to be found equal to the wants of so exceptional a crisis? “Genius,” to use his own words, “challenges our pity when we see it condemned to grapple with impossibilities.”

His ambition was obscured by vanity, and marred throughout by inconsistency and indecision. It was, however, an ambition benevolent and pure, and remarkable for its high disinterestedness and its attachment to the noblest ends. The aims of his policy as a minister were, peace abroad, and, at home, to save his country from bloodshed and civil war. These ends he declared himself determined to pursue, not only in the presence of a warlike nation, but amid the armed turbulence of an exasperated people. His loss of popularity may operate as a warning to the future statesmen of his country; but let us hope that they will bear in mind his love of peace, his zeal for humanity, his horror of civil war; and that, while they govern with a greater degree of firmness and with purposes more distinct and definite,

they will emulate in the objects which they pursue the glory of his bright example.

If we pass from his political to his literary achievements, we find his claims far less open to dispute. He has won for himself in poetry alone an immortality of fame ; and whatever may be the fate of his political reputation—whatever place History, less biassed in her judgment than a capricious present, may assign to him—as a poet he will live in the admiration of mankind. Sentiments which are an honour to the human heart he has clothed with language in which they must remain an ornament to the literature of France and Europe. It is indeed no small thing in such a country as France to have rendered the consolations of religion, and the graces and virtues which attend the domestic affections, popular in society, and popular also among the masses of the people. He has shown, too, that he possesses a sublime conception of the abstract dignity of man ; nor could his friends wish more than that his own personal character, raised far above the vanity and inconsistencies which rest like clouds upon his fame, should have reached the splendid level of his ideal standard.

ARTICLE ON LAMARTINE.

THE reappearance of Lamartine, as deputy for the Loiret, in the National Assembly of France, is a circumstance which many on this side of the Channel will hail with unmixed pleasure and satisfaction. Less prone to hero-worship than our neighbours, we are, on the other hand, less ready to forget those who have once become the objects of our political favour and esteem. There was much in the career of Lamartine, during the short period for which he held the reins of power, which might serve as an explanation of his diminished influence, but there was nothing to justify the feeling which has for a time excluded him from the National Assembly. His rise and fall were alike without a parallel, and his transit from the region almost of adoration, to that of calumny, ingratitude, and neglect, will long bear witness, in the annals of the French nation, to the instability of popular applause, and to the shifting impulses of that mercurial people. We are glad for the sake of France, and, we may add, of England also, that a constituency has been found to restore him to a position in which, notwithstanding all his faults, his manly eloquence and strict integrity of purpose may render signal services to the cause of wholesome liberty, of free commercial intercourse, of progress and civilization.

The able assailant of the September laws will soon find a field for honourable exertion in the abuses of that system which already threatens, in a vital point, the Liberty of the Press. The orator who, in May, 1848, told the National Assembly, that, though formerly “Peace was regarded as an Utopia, it had then become an instinct and a necessity,” may soon find occasion for impressing on the government of a warlike people the importance of entering, in concert with this country, on a system of unequivocally pacific foreign policy.

But it is chiefly with reference to Free-trade principles—to those principles which have recently effected a partial change in the restrictive commercial policy of Spain—to those principles which the successors in office of Sir R. Peel have shown themselves both ready and able to carry out,—that we rejoice in the reappearance of Lamartine as a member of the National Assembly. Through him, while unincumbered by the toils and cares of office, we hope to see those principles advanced some steps towards their final triumph. As the subject is one of great importance to this country, it may not be uninteresting to recur to a portion of the speech which Lamartine delivered on the 24th of August, 1847, at a meeting of the Free-Trade Association at Marseilles. Having alluded to that “language of Providence which ordains to us life at a cheap rate,” he continued, “that is the language of Providence and of Nature; man only has been able to arrest it on their lips in order to substitute a language of his own—the language of nakedness and hunger. Man’s language is, ‘Let us make life dear!’ Let us make life dear—and

how? By prescribing to nations abstinences and compulsory fasts, side by side with the wealth, either natural or manufactured, with which they abound to overflowing. Let us place, it has been said, upon the frontiers of nations, armies which are paid by the money of the people, and are solely employed in intercepting and rendering scarce aliments, metals, utensils, fruits, and even the raw materials of labour, in order that all may suffer from the unemployed wealth of each, and groan, not under misery, but under general prosperity!

“I speak here of customs, gentlemen; but, let it be understood, I speak of customs when used as an instrument of arbitrary prohibitions and privileges for certain industries, imposing a tax upon some to favour others; and by no means of customs when regarded as an impost, natural, moderate, and useful to the state in its collective character.”

After referring to that “enormous, confused, irrational volume,” which was called the Tariff of French Customs, “I asked myself,” he added, “as I turned over the leaves of this code of our voluntary misfortunes—‘Is it possible that this can be the law of God?’ ‘Is it possible that this can be the law of truth?’ ‘Is it possible that this can be the gospel of true protection and charity for the masses of the people?’ No! it is the code of selfishness! It is the book of gold and of monopoly! It is the gospel of social falsehood, and of the blind cupidity of the insatiable producer against the indigent consumer.”

We cannot believe that Lamartine will prove a

recreant to the sentiments thus forcibly and eloquently expressed. We trust that, having taken a memorable part in a late momentous revolution, he will, with unabated zeal, and with the light of more matured experience, contribute to bring about another revolution, less equivocal in character, and more fruitful in its results—a revolution which, some years since, in his reply to Berryer, on the motion of M. Desmousseaux de Givré, and in allusion to the free-trade measures of Sir Robert Peel, he described as “the revolution of food ; the most useful,” he added, “the most productive of revolutions, and one which does not cause human tears or blood to flow.” By such means he may win for himself a jewel of higher price than any that yet glitters in his poetic crown, and lay the foundation, among the masses of his countrymen, of a healthy, practical, and enduring fame.—*July 19, 1849.*

R E M A R K S

ON THE

FORMATION OF THE ST. JAMES'S LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

THERE are few men more ready when called on than the Earl of Carlisle to bear part in philanthropic undertakings, or to share the efforts which naturally devolve on those who possess graceful and cultivated understandings. It is but a short time since that he delivered to the mechanics of Leeds a lecture on the poetry of Pope (of whose writings he, in common with Lord Byron, appears to be a great admirer), and successfully endeavoured to redeem his favourite author from the neglect and depreciation of an age whose poetical taste has gone astray. From lectures on poetry, and travels in America, addressed to the mechanics of the north, he passes to an effort of a more practical character in favour of the Brighton Branch Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes. Within the last few days we find him still pursuing the career of honourable exertion, and endeavouring, in conjunction

with, among others, Sir Henry Delabecque and Dr. Lankester, to foster by his presence, and the attraction of an interesting and eloquent address, a projected association (to be called the “St. James’s Literary and Scientific Society”) intended chiefly for the benefit of the artisans and tradesmen’s apprentices in an important part of the metropolis. Here again the influence of his efforts was shown in the applause which greeted him, and in the numbers who, when the meeting was concluded, enrolled themselves as members of the Society. A work well begun is said to be half finished; and, approving of the objects which they have in view, we congratulate the projectors of the Society on the success by which their labours have been hitherto attended.

A sketch of the origin and growth of these and similar institutions, whether known by the title of Mechanics’ Institutes, or by whatever other name distinguished, would form a very interesting chapter in the history of England’s intellectual and moral progress. Such a sketch would, however, lead us far beyond the limits of our present space and purpose. A glance, and that a slight one, must suffice.

Mechanics’ Institutes owe their origin to a plan which was formed in Glasgow by Dr. Birkbeck, at the commencement of the present century, for imparting to the humbler classes of his fellow-countrymen that acquaintance with the sciences which had been till then regarded

as almost exclusively the prerogative of birth and fortune. Edinburgh, in 1821, while following, improved on the example which Glasgow had been the first to set. London, on witnessing the success which had attended the working of these establishments in the north, was shortly afterwards prevailed on to form a similar institution. Here, again, Dr. Birkbeck was the chief and most zealous promoter of popular education. His efforts were ably seconded by Lord Brougham—the Henry Brougham of other days—whose sympathies found eloquent expression in an article in the ‘Edinburgh Review’ for October, 1824, on the Scientific Education of the People. From that time to the present these institutions have increased and multiplied throughout the length and breadth of England. They have carried not only into crowded cities, but into remote and very frequently ill-informed agricultural communities, the glories of science, the delights of learning, and the refinements of literature and taste.

The chief object of such institutes as that which has just been started, under the best of auspices, in the parish of St. James's, is to supply what may be termed the great want of our artisans and working classes—sound instruction combined with the largest practical amount of cheap and innocent amusement. “It is intended,” said Lord Carlisle in his address, “if proper support is afforded from without, to procure suitable

premises, having a reading-room supplied with the best reviews, periodicals, publications, and papers ; a library furnished with literary works of greater bulk and higher pretensions ; a lecture-room where lectures on appropriate subjects will be delivered by celebrated and competent professors. It is also intended, in addition to this, to open classes for the different branches of useful knowledge—such as drawing, chemistry, and others of the arts and sciences—that the members may be enabled to acquire useful information, and to add to their stock of knowledge.” The realization of the extensive scheme which is here propounded will require not only strenuous exertions on the part of the founders of the institution, but active support and co-operation on the part of those for whose benefit it is principally designed. Eloquent addresses and titled patrons are a good beginning, but no more. It is to the artisans and to the working classes themselves that such establishments must appeal to give them muscle, strength, vitality. Such aid and co-operation we entertain no doubt that the institution in question will receive.

Among the benefits resulting to society from Mechanics’ Institutes we must not omit to mention their effect (well noticed in an Essay on the subject published at Devonport, and now before us) “in bringing together various classes of the community, the artisan and the peer, the mechanic and the merchant, the labourer who

tills the soil or digs in the mine and the owner of the broad acres about which that labour is spent ; all classes meeting with their distinctive features upon them, yet one in the object they pursue and the desire they entertain—the increase of knowledge. Great," continues the writer, "is the advantage to society resulting from this commingling—greater the benefit to the individuals themselves. The rich and influential become conversant with those in a different grade of society, and, learning their opinions, are enabled to correct false notions and implant right ones ; thus they gain the esteem and confidence of their less wealthy fellow-men, and become their natural leaders. On the one side kindness, and on the other independence, create a healthful feeling, and tend at the same time to sound order and national freedom." We trust that the patrons who have lent their names will occasionally, at all events, lend their presence to the meetings of the St. James's Institute, not to damp their spirit by cold and laboured condescension, but to communicate and receive the advantages which must result from the frank and fearless intercourse of heart with heart and mind with mind.

The time has happily gone by at which it was necessary to vindicate these institutions from objections in a religious point of view. "It is preposterous," observed Lord Brougham, in the article before referred to, "to

imagine that the enlargement of the understanding and our acquaintance with the laws which regulate the universe can dispose to unbelief. It may be a cure for superstition—for intolerance it will be a most certain cure; but a pure and true religion has nothing to fear from the greatest expansion which the intellect can receive by the study either of matter or of mind. The more science is diffused, the better will the Author of all things be known, and the less will people be ‘tossed to and fro by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.’ To tyrants, indeed, and bad rulers, the progress of knowledge among the mass of mankind is a just object of terror—it is fatal to them and their designs; they know this by unerring instinct, and unceasingly they dread the light. But they find it more easy to curse than to extinguish.”

Objections on the ground of religion, if entertained, might have been answered, on the occasion to which we have referred, by the presence of one spoken of by Lord Carlisle in his address as the “exemplary” and “judicious” Rector of St. James’s—a gentleman of liberal and enlightened views, whom we are happy to see acting in such a cause in conjunction with influential members of different dissenting denominations. On our part we heartily bid “God speed,” not only to the St. James’s Institution, but to all similar institutions

throughout the land. Their results, though they cannot perhaps be accurately or fully traced, are, we feel convinced, of incalculable importance in the civilization which they advance, and the opportunities for happiness which they afford. Their services will, we doubt not, receive a due acknowledgment when some future Macaulay shall devote the leisure of an honourable intellectual retirement to the task of transmitting, through ages yet to be, a History of England in the Nineteenth Century.—*April 14, 1851.*

ESSAY
ON
HUMAN HAPPINESS.

By C. B. ADDERLEY, M.P.

THE subject of this Essay has been a favoured theme in almost every age and country. In the brightest period of the philosophy of Greece, the connexion between Virtue and Happiness engaged the attention of the greatest minds, and gave a practical and enduring interest to the ethical disquisitions of the Academy and the Lyceum. At a later period, when surrounded by the dangerous seductions of Epicurus, the same question called forth the lofty principles of the Stoics, and roused the stern antagonism of that far nobler school. Still later, if we follow the track of Rome's intelligence, we find it occupying the thoughts of one who was her mightiest orator, and selected as a theme by some among her children, who have perpetuated, even to the age in which we live, the classic beauties of her imperishable song.

In Spain, the chosen land of adventure and romance,

the sober gravity of the subject has not deprived it of literary homage. In the days of that illustrious Prince of the House of Austria, whose youth was shielded by the experience of Ximenes, and whose age declined in the monastery of St. Justus, we find Mejia, in his *apologue of ‘Idleness and Labour,’* inviting, beneath the veil of a graceful allegory, the attention of his countrymen to the chief conditions on which human happiness depends. In Spain, too, as was the case at Rome, the theme received a tribute from her muse, and Mendoza,* like a second Horace, addressed a more poetical Numicius.

To take but one additional instance from the opposite extremity of Europe, we find, in a treatise entitled ‘*Rosgavor Schastii,*’ the subject now before us invested with all the interest which must attach to the productions of Karamsin, the distinguished poet and historian of the North.

In our own land the subject has occupied so many writers that it would be tedious to enumerate and invidious to select. The theme has been ennobled by our moralists, and, as was the case in the classic period of antiquity, our poets have embodied it in their song.

The choice of such a subject for an essay, by a Member of the British Legislature, is a fact which we must welcome as a favourable omen. It indicates, at

* See his *Epistle to Boscan.*

all events, benevolent intention, and great solicitude for the welfare of humanity, on the part of one whose position as a legislator implies no inconsiderable opportunities for doing good.

Mr. Adderley adopts as a motto for his Essay an excellent remark of Mackintosh : “ Labour, if it were unnecessary to the existence, would be necessary to the happiness of men.” From this we learn at once that the author’s idea of happiness is, that it is an active state. It is found in the vineyard of the wise, in which human toil receives its recompence ; not in the paradise of fools, in which the indolent repose ; and, in the words of the graceful and pathetic author of ‘The Man of Feeling’—

“ ’Tis the pursuit rewards the active mind,
And what in rest we seek, in toil we find.

* * * * *

Where passive sense with all her powers would miss,
The springs of action move the wheels of bliss.”

The Essay now before us assumes, as the author observes, almost the character of a lay sermon. We apprehend that we shall not misstate his general views respecting happiness, when we say that he considers it to be the result of virtuous efforts, springing from, supported and tested by, religious principles, and directed by them with regard to means and ends. Such a result accompanies virtuous exertions, whether

they be, or be not, crowned with success, and whether they do, or do not, win for us human praise.*

Mr. Adderley, in order to reconcile his “condemnation of ease and enjoyment with the instinctive idea in every man’s mind of the happiness and dignity of repose, and that it even constitutes the felicity of the blessed,” tells us that, though repose may be the perfection of our state hereafter, here we are but travellers, and may rest only at short and stated intervals.

In the course of his inquiry Mr. Adderley insists strongly on the necessity of self-examination and meditation, with reference to the former of which duties he quotes the following impressive words of Thomas à Kempis:—“Keep thine eye turned inwardly upon thyself, and beware of judging the actions of others. In judging others a man labours to no purpose, commonly errs, and easily sins; but in judging himself he is always wisely and usefully employed.”

Happiness, then, according to Mr. Adderley, *results from disinterested efforts*, varied only and enlivened by refreshing intervals of repose, and communion with ourselves and God. It is in the lot of those who,

* The importance to human happiness of such an independence as that to which Mr. Adderley alludes is admirably set forth by Jeremy Taylor in that beautiful section of the 2nd chapter of his ‘Holy Living,’ in which he is considering the influence of Contentedness. That section, which deserves to rank with the Golden Verses of Pythagoras, contains a rich store of useful hints respecting happiness.

while engaged in a career of virtuous exertion, are content to “leave results in the hands of Him, in subjection to whom, and on whose approval, it (that is, Happiness) exists.”

Our limits will not allow us to follow in detail the arguments of Mr. Adderley’s Essay. We think its great fault is, that it wants simplicity, not only in its plan but in its language. The meaning of the author is occasionally obscured by the employment of expressions which are not in common use. We think that this is particularly remarkable in that passage, in the third page of his Essay, which contains his deduction against idleness. Then, again, the passage in page 36, which contains an allusion to the Sirens of Luxury; and that in page 76, in which he speaks of “the ethereal elasticity of the human soul,” are passages which, we are sure, Mr. Adderley would not, on reflection, consider calculated to extend his reputation as a writer. We fear, too, that, when he speaks of negative tests suggesting their positive correlatives, his meaning will be lost to many, to whom, if less technical in its expressions, his Essay would have been most welcome. The plan of the Essay would, we think, have been both simplified and improved by a division of its contents into chapters.

We are, however, most unwilling to find fault where the object of a writer is a good one; and from the passages which have called forth the preceding obser-

vations, we turn with pleasure to others well worthy of commendation. The author, after speaking of sensuality, attacks in the following terms the analogous mental indulgences which consist in the pursuit of intellectual novelties without reference to any practical end :—“ The mere luxuriator in intellectual pleasure is,” he observes, “ only less grossly selfish, gorging knowledge as the glutton food, not for exercise, but for the mere purposeless and artificial enjoyment of a diseased vicissitude of appetite and satiety.”

The following short sentences also contain suggestions which it would be well for all men to bear in mind :—

“ Far better be conscious of a thousand errors, than feel satisfied in fancied superiority over others.”

“ The contentment of a Christian is with his lot, never with himself.”

“ One course alone bears with it ever fresh and constant satisfaction, and that is the sustained pursuit of good intentions (query, objects ?) throughout the daily instalments of whatever materials of duty life’s various accidents may offer.”

Mr. Adderley informs his readers that this Essay is to be followed and illustrated by successive views of various lines of human life in detail, and he will, we hope, pardon us if, with reference to his next efforts, we offer him a few suggestions. He would, we think,

do well to study with attention the more popular characteristics of some among our writers who have adorned the department which he has chosen. He would find in Jeremy Taylor great warmth of imagination, variety of anecdote, and cheerfulness of tone—in Blair as much simplicity of treatment as moral subjects will admit—in Paley a striking familiarity and singular appropriateness of illustration—in Dugald Stewart elevation of sentiment, embodied in language which satisfies the requirements of elegance and taste. He must, we think, admit that these writers, notwithstanding their intrinsic merits, would never have become so popular or extensively useful as they are, if their sentiments had not been conveyed to us in an engaging and attractive form. We hope that Mr. Adderley, as a writer, will in future bear in mind and emulate not only the elevation of their moral precepts, but the graces of their respective styles.—*May 12, 1849.*

TALES AND SKETCHES

FOR

FIRE-SIDE READING.

By CHARLES FLEET.

THERE are few things more popular than a collection of well-written sketches. They fill up very pleasantly and profitably the intervals of active life, and blend harmoniously with its duties and its requirements. The ‘Sketch-book’ of Washington Irving was a masterpiece in its way, and has proved a fascinating, though sometimes perilous example. Tales or sketches may be taken up and read in odd half-hours. The interest is concentrated, and, though they severally afford less scope for variety of incident than longer efforts, they at all events do not weary us by prolixity. The length, too, of every such tale or sketch is, or ought to be, limited only by the nature of its contents, and not by servile reference to a standard as ridiculous as it is stubborn and uniform. In this respect the author of a collection of sketches has a manifest advantage over the fashionable novelist, who, whatever may

be the nature of his subject, is bound in every case to spin it out into exact conformity with the orthodox dimensions, and to produce three volumes, each more tedious, perhaps, than its predecessor.

The volume now before us is a collection of short tales, alternating with chapters which consist chiefly of what may be termed reflections upon life and character. Of the tales we prefer ‘The New Governess’ and ‘The Friends.’ These contain many traits of true and tender feeling, and exhibit, in several passages, great delicacy of touch, with an evidence of sympathies which do honour to the writer—sympathies which are fitted to become the foundation of active as well as useful effort. ‘The Friends’ we should like to see published as a penny tract, and scattered extensively over the country ; we think it might save many of the weaker sex from being made, as they are made too frequently, the dupes of avarice of the most unprincipled and loathsome kind. With the tale entitled ‘The New Governess’ we have but one fault to find, that it is too short. It ends in the part at which the chief interest is just beginning. If carried to a conclusion it might be made to point the moral which it now hardly suggests with sufficient distinctness. This omission may, however, be easily remedied in a second edition, and is redeemed for the present by such passages as the following, which shows the influence of the affection of a child in withdrawing

the “New Governess” from feelings of absolute isolation and despair :—

“The tears of the governess flowed faster than ever as she kissed the little comforter who had crept to her side—they flowed faster than ever, but not so passionately nor so bitterly. The sense of utter desertion—of complete loneliness—had passed away ; kind words had fallen upon her ear ; and her heart, which was about to close against the hardness and coldness of the natures around her, now opened again to softer feelings. Amidst the storm of fear, and shame, and indignation, which had torn her soul to pieces, one drop of oil had fallen—over the waste of doubt and distraction one ray of light had arisen. A human creature had uttered kind words—a human creature was hanging about her neck ; and slight as was the tie, it was strong enough to bind her down to that task which she was about to fly from with abhorrence.”

The chapter on ‘Undeveloped Greatness’ is full of good, practical common sense, and contains some valuable suggestions. The author visits with ridicule the common delusions of those who love to place themselves in the ranks of “the mute inglorious Miltons,” the bloodless Cromwells, or silent Chathams, and who would have been they don’t know who, if they had possessed they don’t know what.

“True,” says he, in allusion to such persons, “it is too late—and for people who complain in this tone it

always was too late or too early. The time is never come, or it is past. The present is never in their power, as it must be in the power of those who doom themselves to greatness ; it is never a time of trial, of effort, of painful struggle, of continual striving and doing. They do not know such a present as this, and therefore it is that when they look upon the past it is a blank to them.

“ We have little or no sympathy with those who indulge in regrets of this kind, and who console themselves for their insignificance or incompetency by reproaching those who brought them up. Those persons who really possess the power of shaping out a course for themselves different from that of the crowd around them, never complain that it was not done for them by others ; they know very well that it could not be done by any other hand than their own ; and that if they do not do it themselves they have nobody else to blame. Successful or unsuccessful, they are silent. They may reproach themselves, they never utter a word against any one else. True, they might have had their path smoothed for them. But, no—that is more than doubtful : it is not the smooth, clear path that forms the great man, but more frequently the difficulties that he encounters, in overcoming which he increases the strength of his will—his power to do—without which no man can be great.”

There are some good remarks bearing on the dwellings of the lower orders in a chapter entitled ‘ Single Houses and Married Couples,’ in which the writer con-

trasts the French and English systems. He arrives at a conclusion in favour of the latter, founded chiefly on a consideration of its influences as regards individual development, and also as regards the preservation of national character. We have hardly space left for further quotation or remark. We cannot, however, refrain from quoting a charming passage, in which the beauty and innocence of children is strikingly contrasted with what are but too frequently the character and condition of those from whom they spring :—

“ Wonderful, yet how admirable and beautiful, that from the hardened beings which the world makes, from the coarse trader, the unfeeling man of money, the reckless speculator, the selfish man of pleasure, and all the diversities which make up modern society—that from these, as from the shapeless, colourless bulb, such beauteous flowers should spring up, as if Nature still, by her own effort, carried us back to that bright starting-point which, as we advance in life, we wander from more and more; as if she continually reminded us, by the purity and joyfulness of these beings, that she is still the same, and never varies from her model, let us change as we may! He is a happy, and, generally speaking, a good man, who can be a boy amongst boys—who has preserved a relish and a zest for their pleasures—who can sink his presumed superiority, and lose himself in those happy joyous feelings which animate boys in their sports. Happy he too who can enter into the joys, and griefs, and sympathies, and hopes of children—who can

see the beauties which they spy out, though the sight be ever so common to him, and appreciate the cause of their grief and heaviness, though it be ever so transitory! Happy he to whom the bright looks of youth come with as warm a tone as the sun gives to a landscape—for he may be sure that, old as he is, he has yet kept some of those precious gifts which we all receive, and most of us leave behind in youth."

The present is, we believe, the author's first published production: we hope it will not be his last. His hopes are, he says, "to please;" but we think that those who peruse his volume will find in it much that is not merely pleasing, but, at the same time, valuable and suggestive.—*June 1, 1850.*

IN MEMORIAM.

“A THING of beauty,” says a poet of whose fountain of inspiration Alfred Tennyson has drunk deeply, “is a joy for ever.” Yes, and an exquisite joy too, productive of good, though not in form or terms didactic by the analogies of moral beauty and fitness which it suggests. To Alfred Tennyson we are indebted for many of these joys, in which our children and our children’s children will participate as largely as ourselves. In his present volume, too, in the midst of much that we consider, with regard to its influence, objectionable—in the midst of faults with which his readers are familiar—affected simplicity or affected mysticism, far-fetched originalities or eccentricities of style and diction—there are beauties of the kind to which we have alluded—bright creations which take their place at once and for ever in the poetry of England.

We shall not at present attempt to enter generally on the character of the writings of Alfred Tennyson, or on the relative position which he occupies as a poet. One attribute of true genius, simplicity, is unquestionably wanting in him, or, we should rather say, is

wanting in many of his productions. The minds which have master-thoughts within—thoughts which sweep the world, full of life, and power, and beauty, or flow in tranquil currents through its plains and valleys, carrying humanity along with them—do not usually study to clothe the soul's creations with quaint or curious felicities of style or diction. In thoughts the truth and beauty of which are recognised by all, though none had ever yet produced them,—in the language which all use, but which none have used so well,—in these lie the sources and the secrets of that high and world-pervading influence to which genius and the poet, above all others, should aspire.

The want of this attribute in the productions of Alfred Tennyson is the more to be regretted, for, when he only condescends to let Nature have her way, we do not know that there is any writer whose simplicity and naturalness are more captivating and graceful. How free from affectation, how full of unconscious beauty, are ‘The Miller’s Daughter’ and that poem of poems ‘The May Queen’! In the present volume, too, how simple, yet how powerful, and we had almost said sublime, are those words in which he glances at the occurrence from which his latest effusions took their rise*—

* The death of Mr. Hallam, a son of the historian, the friend of the poet and the “fiance” of his sister.

"In Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept."

The chief fault that we find with the volume now before us is, that it is too depressing, and is likely to engender sickly and morbid feelings in minds of a certain class. We notice, too, an almost total absence of those higher consolations which religion should suggest. We miss those hues of cheerfulness and manly resignation with which Christianity invests the outpourings of her stricken children, adding health, and life, and beauty to the Christian elegy, while she ennobles and dignifies regret. The sadness of the volume, though extreme, is captivating. The heart must be cold that does not sympathise with the poet's loss, or that follows, without emotion, all the wayward echoes and indistinct articulations of his too protracted grief. In this the danger lies. The more sweetly the poet sings, the more sympathy his loss excites, the more liable is the grief which he unrestrainedly indulges to become, in the case of the young, not a casual indulgence of sweet, sorrowful affection, but a habit of thought, and, it may be, a pervading tone of feeling.

We know that we are treading on somewhat delicate ground ; we will therefore present a few passages to our readers, and leave them to say whether they have a wholesome tendency, and whether they are such strains as we are entitled to expect from the efforts and

aspirations of a healthy Christian manhood. We are prevented by the limits to which we are confined from giving, at length, the poems in which the tendency we complain of is observable; but the following short extracts will sufficiently show our meaning :—

“ Oh, what to her shall be the end ?
 And what to me remains of good ?
 To her perpetual maidenhood,
 And unto me no second friend.

* * * *

Still onward winds the dreary way—
 I with it; for I long to prove
 No lapse of moons can canker Love,
 Whatever fickle tongues may say.

* * * *

With weary steps I loiter on,
 Though always under alter'd skies ;
 The purple from the distance dies,
 My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives—
 The herald melodies of spring ;
 But in the songs I love to sing
 A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

* * * *

Falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
 And faintly trust the larger hope.”

When a poet of mature years is running on in this strain, we feel tempted to interrupt him with the manly

and energetic language of Longfellow, in his spirited ‘Psalm of Life’ :—

“ In the world’s broad field of battle,
 In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle !
 Be a hero in the strife !

Trust no Future, howe’er pleasant !
 Let the dead Past bury its dead !
Act,—act in the living Present !
 Heart within and God o’erhead.”

We have discharged a duty ; we enter on a task more pleasing.

Alfred Tennyson has a keen and an observant eye for natural beauties, and no man more truthfully describes them. He is evidently at home with Nature, as is shown in the present volume, whether it be that he communes with her in localities where “ thick, by ashen roots, the violets blow,” or where he sees “ Autumn laying, here and there, A fiery finger on the leaves,” or turns his eye upward, to the vault of heaven, where “ drown’d,” as he beautifully observes, “ in living blue, The lark becomes a sightless song.” These touches require no comment from the critic. The following passage, too, is powerful, and equally true to nature with those we have just quoted :—

“ To-night the winds began to rise
 And roar from yonder dropping day :
The last red leaf is whirl’d away ;
 The rooks are blown about the skies ;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea,
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world."

The poem on the Ringing out of the Old Year is, in our opinion, the most beautiful in the volume. It is free from the objections to which we have alluded, and far surpasses that on the Death of the Old Year, which has been published among the author's earlier efforts. It is suggestive, healthy, full of generous aspirations, poetical, sympathetic, Christian :—

" Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light.
The Year is dying in the night ;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
The Year is going, let him go ;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.
Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more ;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.
Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife ;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times ;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.
Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite ;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of God.

Ring out the shapes of foul disease,
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

We trust that we shall not be held to have found fault needlessly with the productions of one who is in favour with the public, and whose poetry we ourselves, in many respects, sincerely admire. We would not have him sacrifice one tittle of that which is in the best and in the truest sense poetical, but we would have him break loose altogether from the trammels of that which Mr. Taylor has termed "the Fantastic School" (in which Shelley's example has been a snare to many who have wanted the apology of his genius), and pour forth for high and holy purposes, and in shapes more intelligible and distinct, those streams of truth, of poetry, and of affection, which might flow, we are convinced, full of life, and power, and beauty, to make men happier and better, from the well-springs of his soul. When we think of all the hearts which such a mind and such a pen might set stirring in the right direction, we pray earnestly that it may not be his destiny to leave behind him the remembrance of a high mission shadowed forth but unfulfilled.—*June 29, 1850.*

GAME BIRDS AND WILD FOWL:

THEIR FRIENDS AND THEIR FOES.

By A. E. KNOX, M.A., F.L.S.,
AUTHOR OF 'ORNITHOLOGICAL RAMBLES IN SUSSEX.'

THE authors of works on sporting have no reason to complain of any lack of popularity or public patronage. From the days of Izaak Walton or of Beckford to the present time, most works of this description, if marked by intrinsic merit, have at once received and have continued to enjoy a large amount of favour and attention. When Beckford's 'Thoughts on Hunting' made their appearance, the 'Monthly Review,' a great authority in the days when no 'Edinburghs' or 'Quarterlys' existed, put forth what was intended to prove a crushing article. The 'Review' produced, however, about the same effect that a late malignant article in the 'Quarterly' produced on the fortunes of Macaulay's History. Beckford's work went through several editions, and will probably survive the memory of the 'Review' which sought to crush it. Colonel Hawker's well-known work on shooting has met with similar success. His volume, though too "professional" in

many of its details for any but an enthusiast in sport, contains passages clear, vigorous, and spirited, which have an interest for every reader. Of late years very many works have issued from the press in which the character of the naturalist has been blended more or less with the character of the sportsman, and which have met with favour from reviewers and from the public. Without intending to select invidiously, we may mention the works of Blaine and Colquhoun, as well as those of Wilson, Scrope, and St. John. These writers have appeared before the public as literary sportsmen or sporting naturalists.

Mr. Knox has taken his place in the latter of these two classes. He evidently loves sport, and has pursued it with intense eagerness. There is a freshness and an enthusiasm in his adventures, as he depicts them, which make the reader and the writer one. Not only does he love sport and know how to describe it, but we feel convinced that he is a genuine sportsman. This is shown amongst other things by the preference which he avows for variety rather than quantity of spoil. He likes both to work and to work well for what he gets. He is not one of the dandies who start at midday from the drawing-room to have game driven up to them, which they butcher by the cartload, and then flatter themselves that they are worthy representatives of the now almost extinct race of good old English sportsmen.

With Mr. Knox, the sport he loves is, however, not an end, but a means towards one. His end is a knowledge of birds, with all their instincts and peculiarities. He is ever ready to forego a tempting shot, rather than lose a chance of adding to his store any interesting habit or characteristic of the denizens of that winged world with which he seeks acquaintance. This in an author is a good quality and worthy of imitation.

It is time, however, to give a specimen of the work before us, and we shall commence by quoting a passage relating to the red-legged partridge :—

“The introduction,” says Mr. Knox, “into this country of the red-legged partridge (*perdix rubra*), called also the Guernsey partridge and the French partridge, is a subject of regret with most sportsmen, especially in some parts of Norfolk, where the value of certain manors has been much deteriorated by its increase. In the first place, their extreme wildness, the rapidity with which they run, and their reluctance to take wing, are serious objections, as they not only spoil the dogs, but disappoint the shooter. In the next, even when killed —although their varied plumage, and especially the brilliant colour of the beaks and legs, cannot fail to be admired—yet the flesh is far inferior to that of any of our game birds—indeed, in my opinion, scarcely to be distinguished from that of a guinea-fowl. Lastly, it has been found that, in those districts where they have once obtained a firm footing, the disappearance of our indigenous partridge (*perdix cinerea*) has been the result—

one to be regretted in every point of view, sporting and culinary ; for with so many disadvantages the foreigner does not possess a single redeeming quality to justify his usurpation.

" It has often struck me as a singular fact in natural history, that, when two species which are very closely allied are brought into juxtaposition, the weaker or less warlike will gradually give way to the other, and eventually become exceedingly rare or extinct. It would appear that similarity in habits, as well as a near relationship or affinity, is a necessary condition. The old English black rat (*mus rattus*), now almost unknown in his native land, had existed in this country for ages, on good terms with the water-rat (*arvicola amphibius*), and even with the common mouse, with whom he was specifically allied, until the importation of the voracious grey rat (*mus decumanus*), to whose superior strength he was at last obliged to succumb. Thus the pheasant and the common partridge had prospered and increased on the same manor for centuries, until the latter was in some instances turned out of his inheritance by his continental relative."

On the moot point as to the way in which the falcon strikes her quarry, the opinion of the author of the work before us, which he informs us is fully corroborated by the more extensive experience of Colonel Bonham, is " that it is by means of the powerful hind talon that the deadly wound is inflicted."

" If a grouse," he adds, " a duck, or a woodcock, that

has been suddenly killed by a peregrine, be examined, it will generally be found that the loins and shoulders are deeply scored, the back of the neck much torn, and even the skull sometimes penetrated by this formidable weapon. Now, as the stroke is almost always delivered obliquely, that is, in a slanting downward direction from behind, this laceration could not be effected by any of the talons of the front toes; nor would the severest possible blow from the breast of the falcon produce such an effect. Indeed, Colonel Bonham had several rare opportunities of witnessing the operation distinctly, and his testimony on this point ought to be conclusive."

The assertion that the Peregrine is not susceptible of personal attachment Mr. Knox answers conclusively by one of those happy anecdotes which he delights to interweave with his ornithological disquisitions. The late Colonel Johnson of the Rifle Brigade, having been ordered to Canada with his regiment, took with him two favourite peregrines as his companions across the Atlantic. During the voyage he used to fly them every day. At length, however, one of them was lost. Shortly after his arrival in Canada a paragraph in a Halifax paper induced him to suppose that his missing treasure was in the hands of the captain of an American schooner lately arrived. Off he set to reclaim her, but found that Jonathan by no means liked the idea of giving up his prize, and that he even professed to disbelieve the story. At length, however, it was agreed

that Colonel (then Captain) Johnson's claim to ownership should be at once put to the test, by an experiment, which several Americans who were present admitted to be perfectly reasonable, and in which their countryman was at last persuaded to acquiesce. It was this: Captain Johnson was to be admitted to an interview with the hawk,—who, by the way, had as yet shown no partiality for any person since her arrival in the new world; but, on the contrary, had rather repelled all attempts at familiarity—and if at this meeting she should not only exhibit such unequivocal signs of attachment and recognition as should induce the majority of the bystanders to believe that he really was her original master, but especially if she should play with the buttons of his coat, then the American was at once to waive all claim to her. The trial was immediately made. The Yankee went up stairs and shortly returned with the falcon; but the door was hardly opened before she darted from his fist and perched at once on the shoulder of her beloved and long-lost protector, evincing by every means in her power her delight and affection, rubbing her head against his cheek and taking hold of the buttons of his coat and champing them playfully between her mandibles, one after another. This was enough. The jury were unanimous. A verdict for the plaintiff was pronounced; even the obdurate heart of the sea captain was melted,

and the falcon was at once restored to the arms of her rightful owner.

We trust that this work, which is the second, will not be the last of Mr. Knox's contributions to popular ornithology, into a knowledge of which "with graceful negligence" he charms the public. When considered with reference to their geographical distribution, and the nature of the food and herbs to which their instinct guides them, the feathered tribes of England may have their history interwoven with geological and botanical observations of an interesting and instructive nature. Their habits, too, offer analogies without limit, which may serve to point a moral as well as to adorn a tale. If Mr. Knox will look carefully for these, and make the most of them, he may, without growing didactic or wearisome through precept, render services of importance to humanity, and, while advancing his fame as an ornithologist, he may win for himself a very honourable position in the ranks of England's pleasing benefactors.

We must not omit to mention Wolf's interesting lithographs, with four of which this volume is adorned. All are good, but the first, "The Death of the Mallard," is exquisitely drawn, and is full of spirit and artistic feeling.—*December 10, 1850.*

SCENES FROM SCRIPTURE, WITH OTHER POEMS.

BY THE REV. GEORGE CROLY, LL.D.,
AUTHOR OF ‘SALATHIEL,’ ETC.

THE prose of poets has often furnished critics with a topic for unmixed praise. It is not that good prose either does or should consist of decasyllabic periods without rhyme, but that an ear which habit has made familiar with the conditions of successful versification is a valuable assistant wherever, as in the case of prose, the ear, and the ear only, can be a guide to euphony. In other days the prose of Dryden, in our own the prose of Southey, Scott, and Lamartine, are instances of a double triumph in the two great departments of composition. Byron as a poet is supreme among the moderns. He has also written some of the best letters in our language.

The volume now before us commences with an interesting specimen of a poet's prose, in the shape of a beautifully written preface, which forms an appropriate introduction to Dr. Croly's ‘Scenes from Scripture.’ Many points of importance are touched upon with taste

and judgment in this preface. The following contrast, with reference to church singing, between the natural and simple practice of the reformed Church of England, and the more theatrical practice of the Church of Rome, will, together with the glance at the different versions of the Psalms, possess, especially in these days, an interest for all readers, and serve to fix their attention on a distinction of great moment :—

“ In the primitive worship of Christianity, the singing of ‘ Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs ’ occupied an important place. But in the worship of the Romish Church, that place was gradually filled by the chanting of the priests; while in the progress of musical science the anthem superseded the simplicity of the hymn. In the sixteenth century the Reformers restored the singing of the congregation to its original rank, and the psalmody of Luther and his successors formed a characteristic feature of the popular devotion. Whether to counteract this new influence, or to re-establish a reputation for piety, Clement Marot, a name equally known in his day for poetry and profligacy, in 1539 published a French version of thirty of the psalms, and the success of this work was as singular as its origin. Dedicated to Francis I., with the *imprimatur* of the Sorbonne, it was welcomed by the monarch almost with enthusiasm; novelty, nationality, and, perhaps, rivalry of the Reformers, made it universally popular. Francis and his courtiers selected each a psalm for peculiar favouritism, and the most immoral court in Europe resounded with religious song.

“ This was the age of verbal chivalry, and France gave the amplest testimony of its spirit by inscribing on the tomb of Marot—‘ *Ci gist des Français le Virgile et l’Homère.*’ The celebrated Calvin, with whom Marot was intimate, introduced this version into the Church of Geneva, and employed Beza to complete the whole number of the Psalms. The faults attributed to Beza’s performance are, a general tendency to unnecessary paraphrase, occasional misconceptions of the original, and the use of expressions too familiar for the dignity of Scripture.

“ With the Reformation congregational singing began in England. For the first time in a thousand years the people were joined with the minister in an important, beautiful, and affecting portion of Christian worship. Congregational singing now became a public right, and the version of the Psalms a public demand. Single Psalms were rapidly contributed; of those the ablest were by the Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt. But a general version was required, and this was undertaken—unfortunately more to the honour of their diligence than of their capacity—by Sternhold and Hopkins.”

The following noble tribute to the poets of Judæa is at once melodious and apposite:—

“ At the head of all poetry must stand the poets of Judæa. I can find, even in the great writers of Greece or Rome, no rival to their intensity, richness, and accumulation of ideas. This is no new conception with me. In some observations which I had once occasion

to deliver in public I remarked on the variety, force, and living grandeur of those illustrious compositions. Poured forth to awake the apathy, or rebuke the guilt, of kings and people, they perform a duty never required of language before, and they were divinely provided with a language fitted for the duty. It is a continual torrent of pathetic or indignant eloquence. Every conceivable image of national suffering and personal anguish, every vivid menace of human trial and divine vengeance, every possible scene of national struggle and individual ruin crowds their predictions. Nations fighting the battle of despair ; nations flying before the invader ; nations torn from their home, and driven out to die among the deserts and under the burning skies of a foreign land ;—the sitters under the vine and fig-tree of Palestine swept to the swamps of Media, lingering out life in the Assyrian sands, or dying in the labours and chains of Babylon.

“ Their images from nature are not less true or less powerful : the scorching winds of the wilderness ; the tempest among the sands ; the ruined and lifeless city ; the polluted temple ; the land lying awe-struck and silent under the pestilence ; ‘ the sky of brass and the soil of iron.’ ”

“ But, in all their diversities of style they have an impress which raises them above earthly comparison. They speak with the authority of an inspired mission. Their language has a purpose altogether divine. They lavish their powers on no rich description of nature, and no luxuriant display of their genius. Their language is not born of flesh and blood. Like the Israelites

in the Babylonian furnace, they walk in fire, they speak in fire, and with them ‘walketh one,’ more than man, a protecting and inspiring glory.

“ I would almost assume that the severe grandeur of the primitive Greek poetry was derived from Judæa. It seems to me that the very tone of Homer is Scriptural, and that in his sonorous simplicity I hear the echoes of the prophetic trumpet, only softened by the airs of his Ionian shore.”

As a poet Dr. Croly has already an ascertained position with the public, and it is not probable that any observations which we might make would add to or subtract anything from it. We must, however, direct attention to a fine passage from a poem entitled ‘Balak and Balaam’ :—

“ 'Twas eve—the flame was feeble now,
Was dried the victim's burning blood ;
The sun was sinking broad and low,—
King Balak by the Prophet stood.

‘ Now, curse, or die ! ’ The echoing roar
Around him like a tempest came ;
Again the altar stream'd with gore,
And flush'd again the sky with flame.

The Prophet was in prayer ; he rose,
His mantle from his face was flung ;
He listen'd, where the mighty foes
To Heav'n their evening anthem sung.

He saw their camp, like sunset clouds
Mix'd with the Desert's distant blue ;
Saw on the plain their marshall'd crowds,
Heard the high strain their trumpets blew.

‘ Young Lion of the Desert sand,’
 Burst from his lip the Prophet-cry,
‘ What strength before thy strength shall stand ?
 What hunter meet thee, but to fly ?

‘ Come, Heav’n-crown’d Lord of Palestine,
 Lord of her plain, her mountain throne ;
Lord of her olive and her vine ;
 Come, King of Nations, claim thine own.

‘ Be Israel cursed ! ’ was in his soul,
 But on his lips the wild words died ;
He paused, till night on Israel stole ;
 Still was the fearful curse untried.

Now wilder on his startled ear,
 From Moab’s hills and valleys dim,
Rose the fierce clash of shield and spear,
 Rose the mad yells of Baalim.

How shall I curse whom God has blest ?
 With whom he dwells, with whom shall dwell ?
He clasp’d his pale hands on his breast ;
 ‘ Then be thou blest, O Israel ! ’

A whirlwind from the desert rush’d,
 Deep thunders echoed round the hill ;
King, Prophet, multitude, were hush’d !
 The thunders sank, the blast was still.

Broad on the East, a new-born Star,
 On cloud, vale, desert, pour’d its blaze ;
The Prophet knew the sign afar,
 And on it fix’d his shuddering gaze.

I shall behold Him—but not now ;
 I shall behold him—but not nigh :
He comes beneath the Cross to bow,
 To toil, to triumph, and to die.

All power is in His hand ; the world
 Is dust beneath His trampling heel ;
The thunder from His lips is hurl’d,
 The heavens beneath His presence reel.

He comes a stranger to His own ;
With the wild bird and fox he lies ;
The King who makes the stars His throne,
A wand'rer lives, an outcast dies ! ”

Towards the end of the volume there are some poems on classical subjects, such as ‘The Wanderings of Io,’ and ‘The Furies;’ in the introduction to the latter of which the author justly observes that “without entering in some degree into the details of mythology we can scarcely conceive from what a burden of fear and folly the general mind has been relieved by true ideas on the subject of Religion.”

We must now take our leave of Dr. Croly and his volume. His preface, which we take to be the latest of his productions, shows that, although he is no longer young, the glow of youthful fancy and of mental vigour remains to spread its sunshine over age. We trust that it will long beam forth with undiminished brightness.—*July 26, 1851.*

FARIS SHIDIAK AND HIS POEM, ADDRESSED TO THE QUEEN.

THE following is a free version of an Arabic poem recently addressed to the Queen by Faris Shidiak, a native of Syria, and now sojourning in this country. The author was some time since employed, by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, to translate the Prayer Book into Arabic, and it is to him that the Society are indebted for the version which they now circulate in the East. He has recently completed for the same Society a new translation of the Bible into Arabic, and is at present engaged in superintending the passage of his version through the press.

Faris Shidiak has obtained great reputation as a poet. Some time since he dedicated a poem in his native language to the Bey of Tunis, who, on receiving it, sent a vessel of war to convey the author from Malta to Tunis; and on his arrival at the latter place rewarded him with presents and money to the amount of about 400*l.*

His brother, Assâd Shidiak, a deacon of the Maronite Church in Syria, was a man of considerable theological

attainments. He was converted to Protestantism by an American missionary, to whom he had given instructions in the Syriac language. His conversion alarmed the Maronite Patriarch Yoossoof Hoobeish, who endeavoured by promises to induce him to retrace his steps ; but, finding that promises were of no avail, he had recourse to threats, and upon this Assâd fled, and took refuge in the house of an American missionary at Beirut. Here he remained some little time. Assâd's family were then prevailed upon by the Patriarch to go to their relative, and induce him, if possible, to return to his home in the neighbourhood of Beirut. In this they succeeded ; and about a month after his return he was taken to the Patriarch by his relatives, including Faris, who was then about twenty years of age, and still a Maronite. The Patriarch detained Assâd for some time at his palace at Kesrawan, in Mount Lebanon, near Beirut, under the strictest surveillance. He afterwards took him to his more distant palace, Kanobin, also situate in Mount Lebanon ; and there he remained a prisoner in a cellar for several years, until at length he died, the victim of ecclesiastical intolerance and persecution. His crime—a dark and deadly one, no doubt, in the eyes of Rome and her dependents—was an exercise of private judgment.

The fact of his death was subsequently discovered by Mr. Todd, an English merchant, who obtained an escort

from Ibrahim Pasha, and with it went in search of Assâd. His brother Faris had become a Protestant, and had fled from Beirut to Malta some time previously to his brother's death.

The following free version has been hastily written, together with this notice, by a gentleman who has studied Arabic with the author, and who is anxious, through the kind assistance of the editor of —, to make known his presence in this country to those who may be desirous of obtaining instruction in that language. It is trusted that this statement may sufficiently excuse any defects which may be noticed in the translation. In some parts, for the sake of brevity, two verses of the original have been condensed into one, and he has endeavoured to tone down some of the compliments, which run on throughout the poem in a thoroughly Oriental strain. The Arabic poem is in the metre termed "Basît," and consists of 88 verses. The rhyme is the same throughout, each of the verses rhyming, as it is termed, in Ra. In Arabic poetry a word containing a rhyme cannot be repeated, in a similar position, unless after an interval of seven verses; and in this poem, notwithstanding its great length, two words only of those which contain the rhyme are so repeated.

"In the west a light hath risen. Oh! how beautiful a light,
Which through all the east hath scattered the darkness of the night !

It has risen full of brightness in a kingdom great and glorious,
 Over which a gentle lady reigns, in name and deeds *victorious*.
 She was born to high distinction such as mortals seldom gain ;
 Where has earth a glory brighter than the glory of her reign ?
 In her might the world exulteth ; she is ready to befriend
 Poor or weak who claim protection, to the earth's remotest end.
 In far provinces with gratitude her name is usher'd in,
 Though another where he dwelleth fails the need of praise to win.
 Great by rank, by virtue greater, to her sex an empire's Queen
 An example of domestic love and gentleness hath been.
 She hath raised the sex she bears to higher dignity and fame ;
 In the presence of her virtues let not man precedence claim.
 If the sunshine leave her kingdom, shame hath put the sun to
 flight ;
 For the sunshine of her countenance is lovelier than his light.

In her reign the days of plenty and of peace the nation bless,
 Which exulteth without measure in its ruler's mightiness.
 Time, with borrow'd light, would seem a long and daily festival ;
 And the sunshine of a happy look sits smilingly on all.
 Through her kingdom in tranquillity her citizens repose ;
 Peace around their toil and industry unnumber'd blessings throws.
 While through other lands the storm of change and revolution sweeps,
 Order o'er her favour'd kingdom still unbroken vigil keeps.
 Seems by Fortune to her high designs accomplishment decreed—
 Seems by Fortune banish'd all that else their progress might impede :
 Fortune waits a humble minister, her whisper to obey,
 Fortune, whom as 'slave with downcast eyes,' a painter might portray.
 None who refuge in her kingdom take shall be oppress'd with wrong ;
 Fate hath will'd that e'en the feeble grow, 'neath her protection,
 strong.
 Men, though ever in their feelings and their thoughts divided seen,
 Bid their idle discord cease, and join in praise of England's Queen.
 Crowded hall in which her name is breathed, its incense sweet
 perfumes ;
 In my ink its radiance glitters, and its light my page illumes.
 Bold inventions, bright and numberless, her fostering aid inspires ;
 Through the air thought's lightning current sweeps along the elec-
 tric wires.

Far through water's realm her vessels glide, and plough the trackless seas,

While o'er subject ports her banner floats victorious in the breeze.

Roads of iron, signs of industry and progress, fill the land,

Speech is powerless to flatter, and the mind to understand.

Happy land ! whose noble sons contemn not Truth, nor Falsehood prize !

Faultless—faulty only in the snare that lurks in beauty's eyes.

Slow is man, in his bewilderment, a resting place to choose,

Form'd by nature, all its regions seem, new transport to diffuse ;

Something ever to delight the eye the traveller will find,

Something ever to invigorate, refresh, enlarge the mind.

Wonder not that Heav'n to England gave dominion o'er the sea,

Largely she has thought for other lands and for humanity.

Vainly would my pen her toils for others' weal enumerate :

Of her children some together link the Truth to propagate ;

Some the boundaries of science and of knowledge to extend ;

Some to foster Peace, and change the name of enemy to friend.

Some would charity diffuse, and some the slave would liberate :

Mighty people which Earth's nations all acknowledge good and great.

Change and fickleness are here alone of climate understood ;

But they vary not man's high resolve, and fix'd intent for good.

England's sons excel in science, and with holy purpose strive,

Bid philanthropy with learning and philosophy revive.

Through the earth's remotest realms her name is honour'd far and wide ;

Through the Desert's trackless sands her fame the traveller shall guide.

Hopeless 'twere, with Time upon the wing, to count the trophies won,

Or to tell of all that English hearts and England's Queen have done.

Staff which hero in her armies bears a sceptre may subdue ;

And the coward, at her bidding arm'd, courageous prove and true.

Shall not Syria's shatter'd fortresses of England's glory tell ?

Shall not India, whose rebellious chiefs against her rose and fell ?

Shall not China, who disdainfully in myriads placed her trust,

Till her overweening power and pride were humbled to the dust ?

See the negro too, in distant lands, from long oppression free,
All the homage of a willing heart now renders gratefully !
These are glories brighter, nobler far than tales of heroes bold
In the chronicles of ancient song by gifted minstrels told.
These are conquests mightier far than all the boasted triumphs won
By the countless host of Cæsar, or by Philip's warlike son.
Oh, may England and her Queen in Heav'n their sure Protector see !
May Heav'n lead them in the paths of peace to glories yet to be !
May it shield an Empire's destiny from heedless change and wrong,
And to her, her spouse and children dear, a life of bliss prolong !
In the firmament of England, as Sun, Moon, and Stars they shine,
But the Sun which gilds Arabian song is ever feminine.*
When the youngest of those stars appear'd to greet my op'ning lay,
'Twas an omen of the brightness that should crown the coming day.
If, as wise men oft have told us, stars control our earthly state,
Then my lay their purest influence shall long perpetuate.
Blessings on thee, gentle lady ! to thy loving sight be given
All the brightness of the stars that shine upon a mother's heaven !"

1851.

* In Arabic, as also in German, the Sun is of the feminine gender.

S O L W A N ;
O R, W A T E R S O F C O M F O R T.

BY IBN ZAFER, &c.

FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS. BY MICHELE AMARI.

THE roses gathered in the gardens of the East have a peculiar, but ever-grateful perfume. This perfume, though frequently overpowering, is generally redolent of something with which our senses were previously unacquainted, and which cannot be compared, except for the sake of contrast, with the odours of flowers which grow in colder latitudes. If, after inhaling the perfume of the blossoms, we pass to their organic structure, we find marks of mechanical arrangement altogether at variance with those with which habit had rendered us familiar. If in such arrangement we occasionally regret the absence of contrivance and plan adapted to our tastes, our attention is, at all events, arrested by the novelty, and very often by the grotesqueness, of the design.

The work now before us is by no means an exception to, but rather an illustration of, these remarks. There are evident internal marks of the stock from which its

author sprung. It is a treatise concerning the political conduct of sovereigns, written in Sicily in the twelfth century, under the rule of the early Norman kings, by an Arab and a Mahometan, a native of the island, and learned in all the wisdom of his race in theology, philosophy, and morality. It offers at the same time a very ancient and interesting specimen of the historical romance, and comprises imitations, which are by no means servile, of those fascinating Indian fables which the Persian and Arabian writers introduced into Europe seven centuries before the time at which the study of the Sanscrit language had made us acquainted with the originals. It is, moreover, interesting from the light which it serves to throw on the habits of thought, the philosophy, feelings, and social life of that marvellous Arabian nation, which, in the eleventh century, fell prostrate, having, in 400 years, run through the whole cycle of its rise, ascendancy, and gradual decline.

A brief analysis of the work is given in the translator's introduction. The author seeks to point out the modes of conduct to be pursued by sovereigns in the vicissitudes of their fortunes, which he classifies, with philosophic ingenuity, under five heads :—1. To trust in God ; that is, to advance resolutely towards the goal if the cause be just, and to abandon the design if it be unjust. 2. To hold on their way with fortitude until

the tempest be overpast. 3. To persevere. 4. To submit to the will of God should the issue prove unfortunate. 5. To consider the vanity of earthly power, and to lay it aside if it prove too heavy a burden.

The author of the book ("whose sins may God assoil!") commences each division of his work with precepts of the Koran, maxims of Mahomet and others, and then goes on to illustrate their application by narratives of real or of supposed events, interspersed with that remarkable combination of poetry, proverb, anecdote, and apologue or fable, in which the writers of Oriental fiction are known peculiarly to delight. The fables are dovetailed into each other to an indefinite, and sometimes rather inconvenient, extent. Thus, for instance, in the fable of the Bear and the Monkey, introduced, as an illustration, into the chapter on Contentment, we find the following exemplification of this process :—

"The monkey replied to the menaces of the bear,—
‘I am not so ill-disposed as you think; and, if you were to kill me, you would have cause to repent, as the miller did when he killed his ass.’—‘Tell me that story,’ said the bear; and the monkey resumed.”

Then follows the fable of the Miller and his Ass, known to all who have read (and who has not?) the ‘Arabian Nights,’ in the excellent translation by Mr.

Lane. This process of running fable into fable is repeated till the narrative becomes confused and complicated, and the mind of the reader is needlessly fatigued by the amount of attention which it requires to disentangle and carry through the train of incident and thought. This, however, is an inconvenience for which the author, and not the translator, is responsible. Possibly it might be remedied by some new arrangement without doing further violence to the original than would result from the partial dislocation of the Arabic text. We think also that the large mass of valuable materials contained in the introduction and the notes might be in some respects improved by more lucid combination and arrangement.

The resignation which so eminently distinguishes the professors of the faith of Islam is emphatically enjoined in the following curious passage, which occurs in a tradition concerning Mahomet, related in the ‘*Mosnâd*’ of Moslim :—

“ On one occasion the Prophet conversing with Abû Horaira said unto him—‘ When any unpleasant event befalls you, do not say, “ If I had but acted thus and thus ;” say rather, “ Such is God’s decree—may His will be done ! ” For the “ if ” opens the breach to Satan, and assuredly does not lead either to trust in God, or resignation to His will.’

“ Every one may see that the Prophet forbade the expression ‘if,’ as rejecting implicit trust in God,

and conduced to opposition to his decrees, and the desire of resistance to his will."

The following passages are in an elevated key, and exhibit an enlightened Arab's notion of that large, and, let us add, that Christian sympathy, which, by riveting society together, proves one of the truest safeguards of the state :—

" Do I not know that, amongst all the deeds that spring from a generous spirit, kindness to the afflicted is that which finds most favour in the eyes of God ?

" It was said that we are all united in a mutual bond of insurance against the misfortunes that may befall any individual, and amongst those who are at ease the most prosperous will be he who regards as his own the calamity that befalls his neighbour, and who benefits him, first by relieving his distress, and afterwards by admonishing him to avoid a repetition of his fault, and consequent return of his misfortune ; so that the sufferer should always be grateful to him, and should be careful not to fall a second time into adversity."

The maxims of state policy are often in an equally elevated strain, and highly creditable to the author. The moral precepts too are excellent, and of these we may take the following as an example. It inculcates a manly love of truth by glancing at one of the social ills entailed by falsehood. It was said,—

" The most arduous undertaking upon which a man

can enter is to associate with a companion whose veracity he cannot trust."

Ignorance is condemned in the following enlightened precept :—

" Be on thy guard against the ignorant man, for he sins against his own soul, nor can he esteem thee more than it."

The anecdotal narratives are, many of them, characteristic, and we regret that want of space prevents us from giving fuller specimens of them. That of the abdication of a king of the Hellenes, of which the translator tells us that he can find no (historical) trace, is very curious and characteristic of Arabian life and thought, to which, rejecting its imputed Grecian parentage, we cannot but feel that it belongs :—

" ABDICATION OF A KING OF THE HELLENES.

" It is related of a king of the ancient Greeks, that, on rising one morning from his bed, the mistress of the robes brought him his clothes. When he was dressed, the maiden presented a looking-glass to him, in which he contemplated himself, and, seeing that he had a white hair in his beard, he said to her—' Damsel, give me those scissors ;' and when she brought him the scissors, he cut out the white hair and gave it to the damsel, who, being quick-witted and of a cultivated understanding, laid the hair in the palm of her hand, held it to her ear, and remained for some time in a

listening attitude. The king looked at her fixedly, and then inquired what she was doing, to which she replied —‘ I am listening to the words of this white hair, whose appearance is sufficient to disturb the highest dignity that exists on earth, since a king is enraged against it, and seeks to exterminate it.’—‘ And what do you gather from its words ?’ asked the king again ; and the damsel replied—‘ My understanding thinks to hear it utter a discourse which my tongue dares not repeat, for fear of anger to the king.’—‘ Say what you will,’ returned the monarch, ‘ and fear nothing so long as you tread the paths of wisdom.’ And thereupon the damsel continued thus :—‘ The white hair says, “O, powerful ephemeris of the earth ! I judged rightly that you would seize upon me and maltreat me ; therefore I did not show myself above your skin until I had laid my eggs and hatched them, and seen my little ones come forth, to whom I have bequeathed the charge of making you pay the penalty of my death. And they are already grown, and have set to work to avenge me, so that they will either slay you on a sudden, or they will trouble all your pleasure and undermine your strength until at last death shall seem to you a relief.” ’—‘ Write down that discourse,’ answered the king ; and when the damsel had done so, he read it once and again, and then hastened with all speed to a temple of great renown, where, having laid aside his regal robes, he assumed the habits of the priests of that sanctuary. This becoming known to his subjects, they hastened to the temple, vying with each other in their prayers to him to return to the palace, and to resume the government of his kingdom. But he would not hear of it, and insisted that they should con-

sent to his abdication, and raise up another king in his stead ; while his subjects, on their side, would not yield, but tried every means of dissuading him from his purpose. At length the priests interposed, and it was stipulated that the king should stay and worship God in the sanctuary, and should administer such part of the affairs of the state as he should think fit, and commit the rest to others. And this he did so long as he lived. And God knows whether all this be true."

We are happy to find that the work in question is only part of a most extensive plan formed by Monsieur Amari. He tells us too that he has every preparation made for the publication of the work of Ibn Zafer in the original language. To secure the publication of this work, for the benefit of the students and lovers of the Arabian language, would be an enterprise well worthy of some such wealthy nobleman as the Earl of Ellesmere, or of some such liberal patron of Oriental literature as the Duke of Northumberland is known to be. We hope that if published it will be printed with the vowel points, which are of the utmost value and importance to students.

If the Society for the Publication of Oriental Texts, the subscription to which is only two guineas a-year, were better supported by the public than it is, either by donations or subscriptions, we should not be eclipsed as we are at present by the French and Germans in this honourable field of literary exertion. The Universities, too, might judiciously set apart some portion

of their revenues for the purpose of giving to the world the texts of those treasures of Arabian learning which now lie buried in manuscript in their noble libraries. In Preston, whose translation of ‘Hariri’ is a most able and conscientious work, Cambridge boasts a scholar fully competent to the revision of Arabic or Hebrew texts. Oxford, whose zeal in this respect seems to have fallen asleep in the seventeenth century, when Pocock died, might surely find some one fitted to superintend the task of unlocking the treasures of the Bodleian. The East India Company, too, we think, might in this respect, with credit to itself, engage in a career of honourable rivalry with the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. But, whatever is done, let the example of Freytag be followed, and let the texts be published with the vowel points. As regards the additional labour and expense attending the insertion of the vowel points, we can only say, better few texts with than many without them.

With the perusal of Ibn Zafer’s work we have been both edified and delighted, and can only regret that such works come but to illumine our pathway, “like angel-visits, few and far between.”—*March 20, 1852.*

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AND CHARING CROSS.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

P O E M S,

ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED,

INCLUDING

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE 'MEDITATIONS
POÉTIQUES' OF LAMARTINE.

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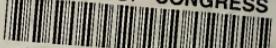
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